



9 November 2015

Melbourne to welcome world leaders in stem cell research in 2018

The world's leading stem cell researchers, physicians and government and health officials have chosen Melbourne as the place to exchange knowledge and share best practice.

Victoria is the national leader for stem cell research, which has been recognised globally with this major win of the 16th Annual Meeting of the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR) in 2018.

"Securing this Meeting is a major coup for Melbourne and for Victoria and recognition of our expert community of stem cell researchers," said Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) Chief Executive Officer Karen Bolinger.

"Our history of innovation and collaboration was one of the many reasons that enabled Melbourne to secure the Meeting over strong competition from Beijing."

Melbourne's winning bid was a testament to the successful collaboration between the Bureau, government and industry partners.

"We take a 'Team Melbourne' approach to both bids and the business events themselves, with such success that Melbourne is renowned globally as a destination that goes above and beyond to deliver."

Nancy Witty, CEO of the International Society for Stem Cell Research, said she and her colleagues were looking forward to holding their Annual Meeting in Melbourne.

"There is marvellous work being done in Melbourne in this field and it will be exciting to share best practice with our Australian colleagues."

Ms Bolinger said that securing the Annual Meeting of the ISSCR would not have been possible without bid leaders and Club Melbourne Ambassadors Professor Martin Pera, Program Leader Stem Cells Australia, Emeritus Professor Alan Trounson of Monash University and Associate Professor Caroline Gargett, Immediate Past President for the Australasian Society for Stem Cell Research.

"The Victorian State Government and Lord Mayor of Melbourne Robert Doyle also played a pivotal role and as always we thank them for their support," Ms Bolinger said.

"Victoria has significant and globally recognised expertise in future industries, such as stem cell research, and that is reflected in securing the Meeting."

Associate Professor Gargett said: "The Annual Meeting is the largest forum for stem cell and regenerative medicine professionals from around the world, who will be educated on and discuss innovations, trends and new perspectives and benefit from collaboration across disciplines.

"International delegates will also have the opportunity to learn from Victorian researchers who pioneered the first joint research program with the Californian Institute for Regenerative Medicine and partnership with the Canadian Centre for Commercialisation of Regenerative Medicine."

Peter King, Chief Executive of MCEC said: "We congratulate our Club Melbourne Ambassadors on their role in aiding Melbourne and Victoria to secure major international conferences which create lasting legacies for the city and state. We look forward to welcoming delegates to Melbourne and MCEC in 2018."

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The Meeting, which will be held at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) over four days in June 2018, will contribute \$13 million to the state's economy and attract an estimated 3,000 delegates. They will stay in Melbourne long enough to more than fill the equivalent of every hotel room in the city centre.

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