

## **MEA ANNOUNCES EVOLVE 2022 DATE**

**[Embargoed until 12.00pm AEDT Thursday 27 January 2022]**

Meetings & Events Australia (MEA) today announced that its 2022 annual conference, Evolve, will be held over 29 and 30 June.

The Melbourne Convention Bureau will be a major sponsor of the event which will be held at Sofitel Melbourne On Collins.

A welcome function will be held on the evening of Wednesday 29 June, ahead of the conference proper and an event dinner on the day and evening of Thursday 30 June.

The registration portal and event program will be made available and published in the coming weeks, but the Board and CEO feel it's important to release the date now to enable planning by intended delegates, sponsors and exhibitors.

MEA CEO Peter McDonald said, "We take much pleasure in sharing with our members and the greater meetings and events industry that we're heading to Melbourne on 29 and 30 June for Evolve. We hope that our early public commitment to lead by example and proceed with our conference will give rise and reassurance to the market and sector at a time when its most needed."

Peter McDonald added "Despite having postponed from last year, we're very excited to have reconfirmed former Disney Head of Innovation and Creativity Duncan Wardle as a keynote speaker for the event."

With other major industry events planned for earlier in 2022 continuing to confront uncertainty caused by the pandemic, MEA intentionally chose these dates when forecasts suggest Australia will be better positioned, thereby enabling people to forward plan with increased confidence.

Traditionally coupled with Evolve is an Awards dinner at which national awards are presented. However the MEA Board has resolved that an awards program for 2021 will not be conducted. This was not a decision made lightly or quickly, and the Board acknowledges there will be disappointment felt by some.

Chairman Michael Firman commented "The Board is confident that whilst regrettable, its decision to abstain from holding an awards program in 2022 is right and in the best interests of the program's integrity, and past and future winners. The capacity to deliver events around Australia last year was hindered by the realities experienced in managing the COVID pandemic. Our hope is that the environment will improve to being one that supports an abundance of events this year that will in turn underwrite a keenly contested Awards program in 2023."

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**About MEA:** *Meetings & Events Australia (MEA) is the collective voice of the events industry in Australia. With the largest network of event professionals in Australia, MEA has been supporting the careers of our members and advancing the interests of the event industry since 1975.*

*MEA's membership represents the largest community of businesses and individuals across the Australian events industry that employs more than 229,000 professionals who stage, produce, manage, support and supply the 480,000+ events held in Australia annually. These events include major events, festivals, conferences, meetings, exhibitions, launches, seminars, special events, community events and much more for associations, corporations, government and the general public.*

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