



Brisbane: the perfect location for health events

Sponsored by Brisbane Economic Development Agency in partnership with Business Events Australia

Introduction

With an estimated global market value of around \$8trn, the healthcare services market is booming, with innovations in healthcare and medtech enhancing, transforming and saving lives around the world. And while the memories of the Covid-19 pandemic might be receding for many of us, there's no doubt living through a global health emergency has given fresh impetus to the potential and importance of the healthcare and medtech industry worldwide.

That means events in the sector are some of the most dynamic and exciting ones around.

When it comes to planning an impactful health event, location matters. Event planners need to prioritise a destination that stands up as a medical technology and health sciences powerhouse. "A successful and impactful health event is defined by several factors, with networking and connection opportunities taking precedence and the destination playing

a significant role," says Lorelle Chittick, general manager tourism, business and major events at Brisbane Economic Development Agency (BEDA).

She adds that organisers should prioritise destinations with "a strong focus on medical science and government support of the sector, proximity to medical institutions or research centres, supportive local healthcare infrastructure, leading researchers and access to state-of-the-art conference facilities."

And that's not to mention the need for great accommodation options, good transport links, varied experiences on offer and a convenient city layout.

It's a long wishlist – but one of Australia's cities ticks all the boxes... Brisbane pulses with innovation, and is making waves in the health and medtech sectors, while pioneering major medical breakthroughs. All that and more make Brisbane the perfect location for your next health event.



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Why Brisbane?

Brisbane is a world-class location for business events. The Queensland capital is one of Australia's fastest growing and most diverse capital cities, with 43% population growth expected by 2041.

It's a fast developing city too, thanks to a AUD\$25bn infrastructure pipeline and a projected economy of AUD\$275bn by 2041.

Here are some other factors that make Brisbane such a compelling location...

■ **Connectivity:** Brisbane is the closest major capital city to key Asia Pacific markets, with globally competitive logistics strengths and 24/7 operations. You can fly directly to 29 international locations from Brisbane airport, including fellow scientific powerhouses San Francisco, Dubai and Singapore. "Brisbane's welcoming, walkable streets enhance the event experience, inviting attendees to explore its vibrant charm effortlessly," says Lorelle Chittick.

■ **An innovation hub:** It's not only the medtech and health sectors that are flourishing in Brisbane, it has developed a reputation for



innovation and collaboration across other industries, including logistics, property and construction, tourism, advanced manufacturing and business services. "Brisbane's strength as a destination for business events shines through its collaborative culture among industry, government and academia, providing incredible growth opportunities in the city with unstoppable momentum," says Chittick.

■ **World-class venues:** Event organisers will be spoiled for choice with Brisbane's wide array of venue and accommodation options. The Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre (BCEC) is the city's major business events venue, having hosted thousands of meetings, congresses and exhibitions for leading associations, government agencies and corporations from Australia and around the world. BCEC was named the World's Best Convention Centre between 2016 and 2018 and has received recognition for its sustainability commitments. >>

43%

Population growth by 2041



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AUD \$275bn

Projected economy by 2041



AUD \$25bn

Infrastructure pipeline

■ **Leisure appeal:** Warm and welcoming, both in nature and climate, Brisbane has gained international recognition as an in-demand holiday destination. With pre- and post-event leisure travel increasingly a priority for delegates, a visit to Brisbane offers the opportunity to tick items off any keen traveller's Australian bucket list, from whale watching to wine tasting. And the city's multicultural heritage means delegates have the opportunity to enjoy rich First Nations experiences as well as a diverse and thriving arts, music and dining scene.

■ **Sustainability credentials:** Brisbane is Australia's nature capital and officially one of the nation's greenest cities, too. In 2023 it became the only Australian city, and the second city globally, to receive the prestigious gold level under the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Cities Global Initiative.

■ **Track record:** Brisbane's reputation in events has soared over the past few decades thanks to its track record as a host city. Hosting the G20 Leaders' Summit in 2014 was a defining moment, representing the most significant meeting of world leaders ever held in Australia at the time.

Brisbane's Olympic legacy

Perhaps the most exciting accolade to cement Brisbane's position as a global player on the events stage is the fact that it is the official host city for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Games Delivery Partners' legacy strategy, Elevate 2042 – the result of a year of community consulting – will ensure a positive sustainable legacy for the city and local communities beyond the Games, further enhancing Brisbane's proposition as a business events location.

"Brisbane's selection as the host city for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games recognises our city's trajectory, while acknowledging our capacity to deliver one of the world's largest events in a way that is both sustainable and leaves a lasting legacy," says Chittick.



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Why Brisbane for health and medtech?

Thanks to strategic investments in talent, research and infrastructure, Brisbane is fast becoming an economic and innovation powerhouse, particularly in the fields of medical technology and health. Recent innovations range from needle-free vaccine delivery to orthopaedic robotics and ultrasound technology to tackle Alzheimer's disease.

12,400

Jobs in Queensland's biomedical sector

The city boasts more than 100 health and biotech facilities, including the Translational Research Institute (TRI), an Australian-first, state-of-the-art facility where biopharmaceuticals and treatments are discovered, produced, clinically tested and manufactured in one location. Queensland's biomedical sector



AUD \$2.1bn

Contribution to economy annually by Queensland's biomedical and life sciences sector

supports more than 12,400 jobs, adding AUD\$2.1bn annually to the state economy.

Brisbane is home to globally renowned universities – The University of Queensland is Australia's number one university, according to the *Australian Financial Review (AFR)* – as well as medical institutes and hospitals, and is one of the largest health and hospital

clusters in the Southern Hemisphere.

“The city's globally competitive life sciences sector is interconnected via a knowledge corridor spanning five kilometres from north to south through the inner city, comprising hospitals, research institutes, and university precincts, making Brisbane an unmatched destination for health business events,” explains Chittick.

100+

Health and biotech facilities



Leaders and innovators

Brisbane is home to some of the world's brightest medical and scientific minds and institutions...

■ **Professor Ian Frazer:** Responsible for developing the world's first cancer vaccine for the prevention of cervical cancer and named 2006 Australian of the Year for his pioneering breakthroughs in cancer research and prevention.

■ **Translational Research Institute (TRI):** Formed in collaboration with four founding partners (The University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology, Mater Medical Research Institute, and Queensland Health), the TRI is conducting research across a range of fields including the Gardasil HPV vaccine, spectroscopy for high risk breast cancer, and theranostic development for prostate cancer.

■ **The Ian Frazer Centre for Children's Immunotherapy Research:** This dedicated children's cancer immunotherapy centre is an Australian first, led by The University of Queensland in collaboration with the Children's Hospital Foundation, Children's Health Queensland and QIMR Berghofer.

■ **Professor David Johnson:** A champion of patient-centred kidney disease research, his work has led to changes in clinical guidelines as well as the creation of The University of Queensland Centre for Kidney Disease Research (CKDR) and the Australasian Kidney Trials Network (AKTN).

■ **Dr Kiarah Khosrotehrani:** Dermatologist and clinical scientist expert in skin biology, regenerative medicine and skin cancer, leading the Experimental Dermatology Group at the TRI.

"Brisbane has three things that strongly position it as a destination in which you can build a successful, globally innovative biotech company: infrastructure, talent and opportunities for growth. Institutions like the TRI connect scientists with clinicians and industry in a unique setting and provide access to research, clinical trial and manufacturing expertise in world class facilities."

David Hoey, CEO, Vaxxas

And some of the medical innovations originating from Brisbane-based start-ups are mind blowing...

■ **Needle-free vaccines:** Vaccines have been in the spotlight since the pandemic and one of the most exciting developments is from Brisbane biotech company Vaxxas, which is developing a needle-free, patch technology that delivers vaccines into the skin in just seconds.

■ **Next gen telehealth delivery:** Midnight Health's tech platform provides out-of-hours access to doctors and pharmacists to enable home-delivered prescriptions.

■ **Artificial heart:** BiVACOR has developed a total artificial heart designed to take over the complete function of a patient's failing heart.

“The city is attracting the best and brightest research talent from around the world and our local academic powerhouses create a pipeline of talent for our workforce. The tremendous lifestyle and climate is also a big drawcard for biotech experts from around the world – which is contributing to us building our team here in Brisbane.”

David Hoey, CEO, Vaxxas

The MedTech Global Accelerator Programme

As part of its mission to champion local innovation, BEDA runs the MedTech Global Accelerator Programme, supporting 10 local ventures to launch a global funding campaign and fast-tracking international connections.

The 2023/24 cohort includes:

■ **Medicsen:** Needle-free smart patch for painless delivery of drugs like insulin, heparin or antibodies using safe ultrasound waves.

■ **Vast Bioscience:** Non-opioid pain therapies to treat severe and chronic pain that traditionally relies on highly addictive opioid medication.

■ **Queensland Brain Institute, The University of Queensland:** A novel ultrasound technology that removes the plaques that characterise Alzheimer's Disease.

Further evidence of Brisbane's world-class commitment to innovation in the medtech space, improving patient outcomes, widening healthcare access and ultimately saving lives.



Brisbane: The home of medtech and health events

Thanks to its impressive health and biotech credentials and investment in supporting medical technology innovation, event planners recognise Brisbane as the perfect home for top-class health events. Brisbane is already set to host more than 20 health and life sciences business events in 2024, including the World Down Syndrome Congress, the Health Informatics Conference, the Society for the Neurobiology of Language Annual Meeting and the Zonta International Convention.

Looking ahead to 2025, Brisbane has been confirmed to host several major health business events, including a large conference in the area of microarray patch technology.

“When Vaxxas began in 2011, there was very little recognition of microarray patch technology globally and limited clinical evidence to support its potentially transformative benefits,” says

Vaxxas CEO David Hoey. “Now we have dedicated conferences on the topic as well as companies, research groups and experts whose core focus is on developing microarray patch technology and the vaccines and drugs it can deliver. It is an honour and a privilege to be part of creating this awareness, and industry, here in Brisbane.”

Also coming to Brisbane next year is The Lancefield International Symposium on Streptococci and Streptococcal Diseases (LISSSD) 2025, which should attract more than 500 delegates and will provide a global forum to present Queensland’s groundbreaking research in the field. The conference will have a focus on prevention of Strep A disease in Indigenous communities and the necessity for their voice in these forums, given Australia’s Indigenous communities have the highest mortality rates in the world.

“Multi-Omics 2022 was an incredible conference bringing together the global leaders from biotech, precision medicine, oncology, patient advocacy and digital pathology to Brisbane to understand how we can collectively move the science and field forward towards personalised healthcare.”

Dr Arutha Kulasinghe, senior research fellow, Clinical-oMx Lab, Frazer Institute, University of Queensland

CASE STUDY: Multi-Omics 2022

In December 2022, 330 delegates, a third of whom were international, flocked to BCEC for the inaugural Multi-Omics Conference, to discuss this emerging scientific field with applications to cancer, infectious diseases and immunology.

The conference explored how the understanding of disease biology can be leveraged by cutting-edge tech, delivering perspectives on spatial genomics, transcriptomics and proteomics approaches, paired with spatial informatics and platform technologies. Thanks to the success of the conference and the fast growth of the field, discussions for the second edition in Brisbane are already underway.



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CASE STUDY:

International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Science 2023

Held at BCEC and hosting more than 4,110 delegates in-person (plus a further 1,200 virtually) over four days, the IAS Conference on HIV Science is the world's most influential meeting on HIV research, bringing together the international research community to discuss the latest advances in HIV science.

This hybrid event was the first in-person HIV science conference staged post-Covid. The fact most delegates attended in person highlighted the value of face-to-face connection (and the importance of selecting the right location). Delegates enjoyed more than 60 symposia and oral sessions and more than 1,400 abstract presentations.

Brisbane was picked as the perfect destination given its reputation as a city with a track record in medical research investment and its impressive community of science's brightest minds, as well as Australia's positive human rights record around HIV. The organisers were also sure to include cultural connections, highlighting Indigenous issues around HIV.



“It’s been a pleasure to organise the conference here... The collaboration with the venue and the suppliers has been really, really positive. I really enjoyed our opening session – we had a beautiful Indigenous welcome and an excellent speech by the minister of health and aged care. It just all came together, a great community... It was reflective of where we are but also the wider global context underlined the urgency that still needs to be there around the HIV epidemic.”

Birgit Poniatowski, executive director of the International AIDS Society



Choose Brisbane for your next major health business event

If you're looking for a destination with an impressive track record in hosting business events, an attractive, accessible and welcoming location for delegates and world-leading investment in medical and biotech innovations, then Brisbane is hard to beat.

"Brisbane provides an opportunity for industry, researchers, investors and government to come together for incredible representation and collaboration," says Chittick. "Whether it's proximity to renowned medical institutions, access to cutting-edge research centres, or

a vibrant healthcare ecosystem, the chosen destination should provide a holistic package that caters to delegates' needs and preferences."

And it's clear that when it comes to providing delegates with a health event experience they will never forget, Brisbane really is the whole package.

Get in touch with the business events team at Brisbane Economic Development Agency (BEDA) and start planning your event in Brisbane today.

CONTACT US



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About BEDA

Brisbane Economic Development Agency (BEDA) is Brisbane's official tourism and convention bureau, responsible for driving investment, growing local business and attracting visitors to Brisbane. BEDA proactively collaborates with associations and leaders to support conferences, ensuring successful outcomes for both event organisers and local businesses. The teams at BEDA and BCEC work closely together to ensure best-in-class events outcomes. BEDA also plays a pivotal role in connecting various stakeholders, helping to enhance events and establishing opportunities for business growth and collaboration.

