



Business Events Strategy 2026-2029



Strategic context

Christchurch continues to grow its reputation as New Zealand's most modern and connected city — one shaped by innovation, natural landscapes, a renewed urban environment and world-class infrastructure that together create the ideal setting for delegates to connect.

Since the opening of Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre and the restored Town Hall, the city's share of business event delegate days for multi-day conferences has grown from 9.8% in 2021 to 18.7% in 2025.

Christchurch is well positioned to compete domestically and internationally for high-value business events as it is:

- A modern, connected and walkable conference precinct brings together world-class infrastructure, accommodation and hospitality, delivering an exceptional delegate experience.
- Supported by growing global air connectivity.
- A collaborative business events ecosystem with deep knowledge sectors, enabling business events that drive meaningful knowledge exchange and long-term impact.
- Ideally positioned to ensure delegates also benefit from seamless access to South Island leisure experiences, enhancing destination appeal and extending length of stay.

Competition across New Zealand and Australia continues to intensify, driven by new infrastructure and increased government investment. ChristchurchNZ's long-term investment in business events, supported through Event Ecosystem funding to 2034, provides certainty for proactive pipeline development and competitive international bidding.

This strategy focuses ChristchurchNZ's efforts where they create the greatest citywide impact: targeted attraction, city positioning, cross sector collaboration and delivering legacy outcomes that the private sector cannot deliver alone.



Business events strategy FY 27-29

This three-year Business Events Strategy outlines our purpose in supporting the city's wider destination strategy, brand strategy and Economic Ambition. It positions business events as a catalyst for economic impact, knowledge exchange, sector growth and long-term reputation building for Ōtautahi Christchurch.

The strategy is designed as a high-level framework supported by a clear implementation roadmap.

The strategic drivers are:

- Competitive market and evolving customer needs: Business events are increasingly competitive, and buyer expectations continue to shift; Christchurch must harness its USPs to win and convert the right events that have long-lasting impact.
- City assets to leverage: Te Pae, Christchurch Town Hall, One New Zealand Stadium and supporting venues, along with new infrastructure create headroom for growth, provided bidding and hosting are strategically coordinated.
- Strategic alignment: The business events strategy delivers on ChristchurchNZ's priorities by strengthening economic vitality, enhancing liveability, building city pride and elevating national and global positioning.

ChristchurchNZ's Role

ChristchurchNZ will lead the activities that most directly strengthen the city's competitiveness, conversion, and reputation — focusing on areas where public sector leadership creates impact the private sector cannot deliver alone.

This includes:

- Bid leadership and pipeline development internationally and in alignment with Christchurch's growth sector priorities.
- Elevating city profile and positioning in priority markets to stimulate demand and confidence.
- Leading public-private collaboration to unlock funding and deliver whole of city outcomes.
- Driving legacy outcomes that amplify the long-term benefits of business events for people, businesses and communities.



Strategic pillars and priority actions



Accelerate & amplify business productivity and growth

Leverage business events to catalyse sector development, innovation and knowledge exchange which create **legacy outcomes**.

Attract: Target and attract business events with an emphasis on Christchurch's high-growth sectors. Partner with tertiary institutions, growth sector champions and industry bodies to identify hosting opportunities.

Position: Promote Christchurch as a city of innovation, ideas and knowledge sharing.

Support: Provide toolkits and support to academics and local hosts to bid confidently and successfully.

Amplify: Highlight and share stories where leveraging business events result in business and talent growth and provide wider opportunities for the city.



Unlock the full potential of new and renewed city infrastructure and assets

Activate Christchurch's worldclass venues and supporting infrastructure to increase utilisation, lift visitation and strengthen the city's visitor economy year-round.

Deliver: Drive city-wide in-market activity, bidding and hosting to ensure Te Pae, Christchurch Town Hall, One New Zealand Stadium, hotels and other business events infrastructure are optimally utilised.

Target: Identify and target conferences that lift visitation in shoulder seasons to support a stronger, more consistent visitor economy year-round.

Identify: Seek out new markets that support current and future infrastructure investment.

Partner: Work closely with key local and national stakeholders to expand reach, unlock funding and deliver best for city outcomes.



Elevate and protect Ōtautahi Christchurch's profile and reputation in national and global markets

Strengthen Christchurch's position as a worldclass business events destination in national and global markets.

Position: Market Christchurch as a vibrant, connected, welcoming, world class business events destination, purpose built for impact.

Deliver: Run integrated, city-led marketing and PR campaigns to strengthen Christchurch's position as a world-class business events destination.

Champion: Showcase Christchurch's strengths in innovation, sustainability and talent through business events.

Support: Develop and maintain a comprehensive business events asset hub to support partners and clients to attract and host conferences with confidence.

What success looks like

This strategy will be measured against four key outcomes:



GROW VALUE

Grow the direct economic value of business events to Christchurch economy.

Grow market share of multi-day conferences from 18.7% to 20%.



REDUCE SEASONALITY

Lift visitation in shoulder and off-peak periods to build a more resilient, year-round visitor economy.

Support growth in length of visitor length of stay from 1.8 to 2.2 days.



CITY PROFILE

Elevate the profile and reputation of Ōtautahi nationally and globally.

Metric to be determined in conjunction with MBC.



SUPPORT KEY GROWTH SECTORS

Grow the direct economic value of business events to Christchurch economy.

Demonstrate legacy outcomes that the attraction of business events enables for the city.

Enablers

People and capability

Strengthen capability of operators, hosts, academics and partners across the customer journey. Ensure the team have the right systems and tools to succeed.

Partnerships

Deepen relationships across local, national and international industry, and academia to support attraction, investment and leverage.

Assets

Continue to build a comprehensive, easy to use, asset platform that helps clients and industry partners attract events and boost delegate numbers.

Networks

Leverage sector champions, Tūwhana 1 advocates and international networks to build Christchurch's business events pipeline.

Knowledge and insights

Strengthen our customer data, research and insights to guide decisions and measure impact.



Closing statement

This strategy affirms ChristchurchNZ's commitment to building a competitive, resilient business events ecosystem. By aligning partners, leveraging world-class infrastructure, and sharpening city positioning, Christchurch will continue to grow its profile, attract highvalue events, and deliver strong economic and legacy outcomes.