

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Creative Industries



Thursday, 13 October 2022

NEW CEO FOR MELBOURNE CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre has appointed Natalie O'Brien AM as its new Chief Executive Officer.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos announced the details today, confirming Ms O'Brien will commence in early 2023.

Ms O'Brien will be responsible for the overall management and strategic direction of the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre and the new Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre when it commences operations in 2026.

Regarded as an exceptional and visionary leader in the tourism and events space, Ms O'Brien is a former CEO of Food and Wine Victoria which produces Australia's internationally acclaimed Melbourne Food and Wine Festival.

Ms O'Brien's former CEO work includes Wine Victoria and Ballarat Regional Tourism, before recently managing her own consultancy business.

Making a significant contribution to Australia's food, wine and tourism industry, Ms O'Brien has been recognised with a collection of national awards, including her appointment as a Member of the Order of Australia in the 2019 Australia Day Honours for significant service to tourism, wine, and the community of Victoria.

Ms O'Brien's appointment follows the departure of outgoing CEO, Peter King, who held the position for 11 years and delivered lasting positive impacts, including overseeing the site's expansion and securing the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal to be held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre each year.

Generating \$1.1 billion in benefits for Victoria in 2018/19, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre offers Melbourne as the ultimate destination for staging events, exhibitions and large-scale meetings.

Quotes attributable to Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"Recognised for her contributions to Victoria's tourism and major events sector, Natalie brings exceptional leadership and experience to Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, ensuring the organisation continues to draw the events and exhibitions that support businesses and create jobs."

"I thank Peter for his hard work and service across 11 years at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, under his leadership the venue has played an essential role in drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors to Victoria."

Quote attributable to newly appointed Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre CEO Natalie O'Brien

"I'm excited to lead an already iconic Melbourne landmark into the next phase of growth, as the organisation's enormous impact and benefit continues to expand across Victoria."

Quote attributable to Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Trust Chair John Brumby AO

"We're really pleased with Natalie's appointment as CEO of MCEC. We've been lucky to attract an executive with the experience and skill set to lead the organisation in the years ahead. She brings great insight and a tremendous track record of driving change and growth in organisations."

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