



MEETINGS AFRICA

DAILY NEWS

BONDay | 24 FEBRUARY 2025



Welcome to BONDay as we kick off Meetings Africa 2025!

I welcome you to Meetings Africa 2025, Africa's premier business events trade show, where quality connections spark meaningful opportunities and drive our continent's success.

Meetings Africa is more than an event - it is a catalyst for Africa's economic growth, driven by the power of small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs). These businesses are the backbone of our economy, fuelling job creation and unlocking new opportunities across the continent.

BONDay sets the stage, empowering SMMEs with insights and connections that transform industries. With four new countries — Chad, Guinea, Madagascar, and Morocco — joining our growing network, Africa's presence on the global MICE stage continues to expand.

Sustainability remains at our core. Visit our Sustainability Village, where supporting local artisans directly uplifts communities and strengthens our tourism sector. Your support not only makes for a meaningful memento but also directly uplifts our vibrant communities and supports our tourism ecosystem.

And for our international guests - extend your stay, explore South Africa, and experience the richness of our heritage.

Whether joining the curated post-tours across our nine provinces or simply exploring Gauteng, our dynamic host province, there is so much more to discover. From rich culture to diverse experiences, South Africa has countless stories waiting to be uncovered.

This year's programme is packed with thought-provoking sessions and dynamic speakers who will share valuable perspectives, setting the tone for the impactful days ahead.

Meetings Africa 2025 is where partnerships thrive, businesses grow, and Africa's future is built. Let us shape it together!

Wishing you an inspiring, productive, and memorable Meetings Africa 2025!

Nombulelo Guliwe
CEO, South African Tourism



Nombulelo Guliwe,
CEO: South African Tourism



Meetings Africa 2025 in Numbers

410
Exhibitors



26 African Countries Represented

300+ Hosted Buyers

No. of SMMEs **113**

*Figures as at 23 February 2025

South Africa, the home of G20



BONDay : What to expect

TIME	EVENT	VENUE
08:00 - 10:00	AFSAE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Annual General Meeting hosted by the Event Greening Forum.	Convention Centre - Boardroom 6 By Invitation Only
09:00 - 10:30	EVENT GREENING FORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Annual General Meeting hosted by the Event Greening Forum.	Convention Centre - Boardroom 3 By Invitation Only
09:00 - 12:00	MEETINGS AFRICA BONDAY - OPENING PLENARY SESSION - MOTHER AFRICA EARTH / UMHLABA The Meetings Africa Business Opportunity Networking Day is a carefully curated selection of educational sessions, informative current trends and topical issues being discussed with the business events industry in a meaningful way.	Convention Centre - Ballroom 1/70 Open to all
09:00 - 13:00	MEETINGS AFRICA BONDAY EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS The Meetings Africa Business Opportunity Networking Day is a carefully curated selection of educational sessions, informative current trends and topical issues being discussed with the business events industry in a meaningful way.	Convention Centre - Plenary Level -2; Ballroom 1/2/3 - Breakaways Open to all
09:00 - 17:00	IMEX - MPI - MCI FUTURE LEADERS FORUM A youth-focused business events forum, which hosts a selection of top students from various African academic institutions. This session aims to educate students as well an entice them towards careers opportunities in the business events industry..	Convention Centre Committee Room 5 By Invitation Only
10:00 - 11:30	ICCA AFRICA CHAPTER MEETING The International Congress and Convention Association Association Day is designed for ICCA Africa members as an educational seminar and to informally network with Association Buyers attending Meetings Africa.	Convention Centre - Boardroom 6/7 By Invitation Only
11:00 - 12:30	MEETINGS AFRICA BONDAY EDUCATIONAL SESSION - STREAM 1 - AMANZI / WATER EXPLORING THE DEPTH OF SUSTAINABILITY	Convention Centre - Ballroom 1/70 Open to all
11:00 - 12:30	MEETINGS AFRICA BONDAY EDUCATIONAL SESSION - STREAM 2 - UMLILO / FIRE SPARKS OF CHANGE	Convention Centre - Ballroom 1/70 Open to all
11:00 - 12:30	MEETINGS AFRICA BONDAY EDUCATIONAL SESSION - STREAM 3 - UMHLABA / EARTH SEEDING BUSINESS GROWTH	Convention Centre - Ballroom 1/70 Open to all
11:00 - 17:30	MEETINGS AFRICA BONDAY EDUCATIONAL SESSION - STREAM 3 - UMHLABA / EARTH The International Congress and Convention Association Association Day is designed for ICCA Africa members as an educational seminar and to informally network with Association Buyers attending Meetings Africa.	Convention Centre - Bill Gallagher Invitation Only
15:00 - 16:30	TGCSA SPEED MARKETING The Tourism Grading Council of South Africa hosts its first Speed Marketing Session geared towards showcasing business events products to buyers and media. This year's session will predominately feature hotel groups (accommodation and conference/meeting venues) with a footprint in South Africa and some parts of the African continent, unlocking Africa's opportunities through quality connections.	Committee Room 4 By Invitation Only
17:00 - 19:00	ICCA MEETINGS AFRICA ASSOCIATION DAY COCKTAIL RECEPTION ICCA Meetings Africa Association Day Cocktail function.	Convention Centre Bill Gallagher Foyer Open to all
17:30 - 22:00	SOUTHERN SUN MEETINGS AFRICA BUYER NETWORKING COCKTAIL EVENT As a bid partner, Southern Sun Group welcomes buyers to the host city in collaboration with the Host Venue, the Sandton Convention Centre.	Sandek, Sandton Sun & Towers By invitation only

Green Tips for Hosted Buyers and Delegates

Help us showcase Africa as a premier business events destination that cares about its people and the environment.

1. To offset your carbon footprint, consider purchasing a tree for only R165 excl VAT. This can be ordered through the service manual. After the event, the trees will be planted in a local community.

2. Carpool to reduce your carbon footprint. It will also alleviate the parking congestion at the Sandton Convention Centre and will save you money!

3. If you are from out-of-town, why not make use of the Gautrain and hotel shuttle services (where applicable) when getting around. This will also go a long way to reducing your carbon footprint.

4. Make the most of your time at Meetings Africa by planning meetings around the show. With so many key players in one location at the same time, the show provides the perfect opportunity to meet, and
- thereby decrease your need for future travel and your carbon footprint.

5. Drink the filtered tap water that is freely available on the exhibition floor, rather than bottled water.

6. As implemented in the past, there will be a R15 surcharge on bottled water. This money will be donated to the event's carbon-offset programme after the event.

7. Use the recycling bins at the show. A three bin system will be implemented for recyclable, non-recyclable and food waste. These bins will be clearly labelled but sometimes people throw the wrong waste in the wrong bin – this can contaminate recyclables and render them non-recyclable e.g. if food waste contaminates paper waste.

Support The Sustainability Village Vendors

The Sustainability Village is an iconic feature of Meetings Africa where delegates can support local arts and crafters to purchase authentic South African products. Find the village on Floor -2.

Meetings Africa Daily Newspaper Publishers

Publisher	Sola Media
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Four Countries to Make Their Debut on Sold-Out Trade Floor

With the addition of Chad, Guinea, Madagascar, and Morocco, Meetings Africa expands its reach, offering attendees fresh perspectives and untapped opportunities.

Meetings Africa 2025 is set to welcome new African participants to its sold-out exhibition floor, with Chad, Guinea, Madagascar, and Morocco making their debut at the continent's leading business events trade show.

The presence of 410 exhibitors from 26 African countries, including 85 new exhibitors, on the trade floor (*Figures as at 23 February 2025), along with hosted buyers and media from around the globe, underscores the unwavering confidence that the African business events industry has in this premier trade show for the meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) sector.

Fresh perspectives

With the addition of these four nations, the event expands its reach, offering attendees fresh perspectives and untapped opportunities in the business events landscape on the continent.

Each of these countries offers distinct tourism and business event experiences. Chad boasts a vibrant cultural heritage and developing conference infrastructure, while Guinea highlights its rich history



alongside a growing meetings and incentives sector. Madagascar captivates with its stunning landscapes and eco-tourism appeal, and Morocco stands out with its world-class venues, diverse cultural experiences, and well-established business events sector.

Together, these destinations enrich Africa's meetings and business events industry with diverse and dynamic offerings. Their participation underscores the event's mission to drive intra-African collaboration and economic growth through the business events sector.

Emerging Player

Princesse Grovogui, Sales Manager at Noom Hotel Conakry in Guinea, shared her enthusiasm about their debut at the event: "Meetings Africa is a valuable platform for us to showcase Guinea's potential as a business events destination. As first-time exhibitors, our goal is to connect with key industry stakeholders, gain insights from experienced African destinations, and establish Guinea as an emerging player in the MICE sector. I look forward to engaging with leading professionals, exploring business exchange opportunities, and enhancing our commercial strategies. My hope is to build new connections and create opportunities for future leadership."

With the exhibition floor fully booked, Meetings Africa 2025 is set to be an impactful edition. Among the key anchoring exhibitors at this year's event are leading African convention bureaus, premier hotels, renowned event venues, and airline and rail hospitality providers, all showcasing Africa's diverse and competitive offerings in the global MICE industry.

Newcomers

Among the newcomers are innovative product makers from Eswatini and Zimbabwe, each highlighting the unique strengths of their regions.

"We're thrilled to be part of Meetings Africa 2025," said Tobie Motsa of Mountain View International Hotel in Eswatini. "This is an excellent opportunity to showcase Eswatini's cultural heritage, world-class facilities, and warm hospitality to the global business events market."

Bernadette Veldsman of Pure Africa, Zimbabwe, added: "Meetings Africa provides a vital platform to demonstrate Zimbabwe's world-class infrastructure and unforgettable experiences. The connections made here will drive growth and innovation in our industry."

Enriched Programme

With this year's event already demonstrating record-breaking engagement, both buyers and exhibitors can anticipate an event that not only drives business success but also reinforces Africa's position as a leading MICE destination on the global stage.

Attendees can also look forward to an enriched programme, including insightful knowledge sessions, impactful networking opportunities, and curated business matchmaking sessions that foster meaningful partnerships.

With a strong focus on collaboration, sustainability, and economic impact, Meetings Africa 2025 promises to be another milestone event in shaping the future of MICE on the continent.



G20: SA's Biggest Moment Since the World Cup

With over 135 meetings scheduled across the country in 2025, PCOs, DMCs, and tourism and event service providers are urged to grab the opportunity.

South Africa's turn to host the G20 Summit in 2025 is being hailed as a game-changer for the business events and tourism sectors.

With approximately 135 meetings scheduled to take place across the country in the lead-up to the summit, South Africa's presidency of the G20 presents a fantastic opportunity to showcase and amplify the contributions of the tourism and business events sectors to economic growth and job creation.

"The anticipation of the G20's impact on our economy is already evident, with global attention firmly on South Africa," says South African Tourism CEO Nombulelo Guliwe. "This was underscored by our successful hosting of the first meeting of the foreign ministers last week, and in the coming week, we will welcome the finance ministers of the G20 countries. The world's eyes are indeed on South Africa."

Beyond the political and diplomatic significance, these high-level meetings bring tangible economic benefits, Guliwe added. "Leaders and their support staff will be booking accommodations in our tourism establishments, dining in our restaurants, and exploring our cultural offerings during their downtime. This will provide substantial advantages for small, medium, and micro enterprises, as we will encourage G20 delegates to explore our hidden treasures, engage with our traditions and cultural experiences, and support local businesses."

Prime Opportunity for Event Service Providers

Based on prior events, Pieter Swart, MD of Conference Consultancy South Africa, estimates between 50,000



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- Nombulelo Guliwe

and 60,000 people will travel to South Africa in 2025 for G20 meetings scheduled nationwide. This figure excludes an estimated 5,000 to 8,000 accompanying family members and companions.

Swart urges, "Professional Conference Organisers (PCOs), Destination Management Companies (DMCs), and other event service providers have a prime opportunity to position themselves as strategic and logistical partners for government, corporate, and international delegations attending the G20 Summit and its associated events."

He believes that by offering bespoke event solutions, high-level networking opportunities, and curated post-event tourism experiences, these companies can showcase South Africa's unique offerings while ensuring seamless event execution.

Immense responsibility

However, Swart cautions that hosting an event of this scale brings immense responsibility and significant risks.

"A mature events ecosystem and a well-developed value chain are essential for success. Planners must be well-versed in international event management standards to meet the expectations of high-ranking participants," says Swart.

"Continuous professional development is critical for industry professionals to stay updated with advancements in technology, infrastructure, and best practices."

Swart notes that professional designations are increasingly important as benchmarks for verified competence.

"To fully capitalise on the G20 Summit, event companies must strengthen supplier networks and forge collaborations with global partners, enhancing service delivery and positioning South Africa as a premier destination for high-profile international events," he adds.

More Eyeballs

Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) CEO Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa emphasises the significance of the G20, B20 (Global Business Forum for G20), and the Tourism Ministers G20 for showcasing South Africa's capabilities and infrastructure.

"I think it goes a long way that people see us in this different light... If we point the political media cameras to different angles as well, we gain a whole lot more eyeballs into the country."

“The G20 Summit presents a rare and powerful opportunity for the local and regional business events and leisure tourism industries. With strategic planning and proactive engagement, it can leave a lasting legacy for business events across Africa.”

- Pieter Swart



“From a Brand Africa perspective, Africa will be looked at slightly differently, that we are a contender in this space for hosting events and we can do so. And this will mean that people look into other countries as well.”

- Tshifhiwa Tshivhengwa



Down the Value Chain

Tshivhengwa says this applies down the value chain: “I always say that the G20 is about tourism, other than the discussions that people will be having... when they’re sitting there, they’re sitting at a venue that is provided by us. They’re sitting on the chairs that are provided by us, the decorations that’s provided by us, the food that’s provided by us, the staging that’s provided by us, the transportation, the hotels and everything is about tourism and its value chain.

“So, let’s make sure that we show up and we show the world what we’re made of.”

“There are probably very few moments in the past that have showcased our capabilities as a country. But this is our biggest moment since we hosted the World Cup.”

Seize the Moment

Tshivhengwa encourages event organisers and PCOs to seize the moment. “There’s a whole lot of meetings that are happening or that will happen throughout the year, leading up to the G20 summit in November. So, it’s very important that as a PCO or as an event organiser, one needs to be looking at who’s going to be holding this

meeting, where are they going to be held, how can I be the PCO for that type of meeting...

“Because those government departments that may not have PCOs already constructed, they may be looking for the PCOs to come on board. So, there are significant opportunities there. I would suggest that everyone be prepared, help where you can help, take advantage of the opportunity where it presents itself and make sure that you assist in making sure that South Africa looks good.”

Join the conversation

Don’t miss the Panel Discussion:

Impact of the G20 on the MICE Sector taking place during the Meetings Africa BONDday - Opening Plenary Session.

Time: 09:00 - 12:00

Venue: Sandton Convention Centre Ballroom 1/70



Strategies to Effectively Leverage G20 Opportunity

By Pieter Swart

1. Early Engagement & Partnerships

Establish relationships with government, international delegations, and corporate stakeholders involved in G20 events.

3. Showcasing Expertise

Demonstrate capability, capacity, and competence through past successes in managing high-profile events to secure contracts for side meetings, gala events, and networking sessions.

2. Legacy Building

Develop sustainable event solutions that contribute to South Africa’s long-term positioning as a global business events hub and expose Africa’s emerging opportunities and unique experiences to the rest of the world.

4. Knowledge Exchange

Encourage industry leadership to create opportunities for sharing experiences and collective learning to build institutional memory and expand our Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK). Harvesting this will be an investment in our collective future.

Aviation can play a catalytic role in Africa's development

The continent needs to focus on the benefits of an efficient and progressive aviation industry, writes Airlines Association of Southern Africa CEO Aaron Munetsi.

The Airlines Association of Southern Africa (AASA) congratulates The Event Network on their launch at the Meetings Africa 2025.

AASA strongly believes in the need for a collaborative approach by all sectors of the economy across the continent. Tourism, aviation, hospitality, and trade and investment are all interdependent.

Successful economies often adopt a “hunt as a pack” approach where efforts and resources are channelled towards initiatives that have a mutual benefit to all. Despite the competitive nature of the industry, airlines have demonstrated that they are resilient and that they can cooperate in a legal manner.

Seamless Services

Our members are indeed leading in terms of collaboration when one considers that inasmuch as they are competing for the same customers, they cooperate within the ambits of the law in the form of interline and code-share agreements.

These initiatives benefit

the customers by providing them with seamless and affordable services.

The African continent needs to focus on the benefits of an efficient and progressive aviation industry.

The Single Africa Air Transport Market (SAATM) is the African Union's flagship project whose objective is to liberalise aviation on the continent. The benefits of liberalisation have been showcased in many studies.

The charges, fees, taxes, and levies as well as cost of Jet-A1 fuel are prohibitively high. These costs act as a disincentive for airlines to increase their services and discourage passengers from travelling by air.

Enabling Environment

AASA calls on all African countries to provide the enabling environment required to make our airlines sustainable for the benefit of passengers and economies alike. This is also in support of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement whose roll out stands to benefit the continental economies tremendously.

All progressive African countries must open up intra-Africa travel to African citizens through the Free Movement of People.

Africa must become visa free for Africans travelling on African passports. The resultant increase in aviation will act as a catalyst to the African economies.

African aviation has the potential to greatly contribute to the continent's development.

“Africa must become visa free for Africans travelling on African passports. The resultant increase in aviation will act as a catalyst to the African economies.”

AASA emphasises the importance of collaboration across sectors like tourism, aviation, hospitality, trade, and investment.

As such we actively participate in trade shows such as Meetings Africa where we engage with our stakeholders.

Demographic Dividends

We are calling on all the regulatory authorities to support the aviation industry and in so doing they will be supporting the tourism industry.

Africa has the abundance of attractions and activities that no other continent can equal. We are calling on governments to capitalize on the population and demographic dividends of one of the largest populations in the world. That population is also the youngest population. This provides the aviation industry and the African economy with youthful energy and skills that will continue to be our competitive advantage for many years to come.

We wish the Event Network the best of success and we look forward to collaborating further on various initiatives that bring us mutual benefits.

SAA Increases Fleet Size and Flight Offerings

The added seat capacity in both the domestic and regional market will contribute to the affordability of passenger air travel, says interim CEO Professor John Lamola.

South African Airways (SAA) has added two aircraft to its fleet, growing its fleet size to 20 aircraft.

“This is a remarkable achievement considering that just over three years ago, the airline emerged from business rescue with just six aircraft. Since 2021, the team at SAA has worked strategically and consistently to grow the fleet and route network sustainably. These additional aircraft will enable SAA to continue fulfilling our promise to add seat capacity in both the domestic and regional market and thereby contributing to the affordability of passenger air travel,” says Professor John Lamola, interim CEO at SAA.

The two narrow-body Airbus A320s are being leased from Ireland-based AerCap, one proof of the recovery of the airline's credit status with major international aviation finance institutions, the airline said.

More Direct Access

SAA is rolling out a plan of adding five aircraft to its fleet during this 2025 calendar year.

“SAA's fleet growth comes as the airline enters a phase of consolidation, increasing the frequency of flights to service an existing route network, to ensure South African leisure and business travellers enjoy more direct access to major African cities. In addition, SAA Cargo facilitates trade links between economic hubs across the continent and beyond,” Lamola added.

Last month SAA relaunched daily flights between Dar es Salaam and Johannesburg and has expanded flight frequency on its services to Harare (Zimbabwe) and Lusaka (Zambia) to 12 flights per week, up from 10 and seven flights a week, respectively.

Flights to Lagos (Nigeria) and Accra (Ghana) have been increased from three to four times a week, while SAA is now also flying to Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) five times a week and began flying to the DRC's mining hub, Lubumbashi, in November.

Heralds a Bridge

Lamola said the schedule of seven weekly return flights between Johannesburg and Dar es Salaam has been engineered to accommodate both point-to-point and connecting passengers.

“This flight is not simply a milestone for SAA and linking Johannesburg and Dar es Salaam through air travel; it heralds a bridge that connects two of Africa's most influential economies and strengthens the friendship between our nations,” says Lamola.

“It brings together industries, communities and resources, enabling us to unlock greater prosperity, foster collaboration and generate new opportunities for trade, investment and development for both our economies, and for the people of South Africa and Tanzania.”

Dar es Salaam is East Africa's largest city by population size and is an important regional economic and logistical hub. It is also a gateway for popular tourist attractions in the region.

Lamola said the relaunch represents SAA's strategic initiative to strengthen the airline's presence across Africa.

“SAA's regional network has emerged as a top performer, contributing significantly to the revenue of the SAA Group. More importantly, these regional connections are crucial for the broader economic growth of South Africa,” he said.



ICCA to solidify Africa's place as a top-tier destination

Frank Murangwa, ICCA's Regional Director for Africa, outlines how ICCA's strategic objectives aim to elevate the continent's MICE industry.

The International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) is the global community and knowledge hub for the Meetings Industry, committed to advancing the MICE sector worldwide, with a specific focus on Africa. In 2025, ICCA's strategic objectives aim to elevate Africa's MICE industry, responding to the growing demand for international business events across the continent.

Africa has shown remarkable growth in international meetings, hosting 371 international association meetings in 2023, reflecting an 8.3% increase from 2022. This positions the continent as an emerging leader in global MICE tourism. In 2025, ICCA intends to solidify Africa's place as a top-tier destination for business events through its strategic initiatives.

ICCA's Global Advocacy Initiative empowers members to advocate for the economic and social value of international meetings. This includes leveraging education, strategic communications, lobbying, and sharing best practices to engage with governments, stakeholders, and local communities. In Africa, this advocacy not only attracts more international events but also maximizes their economic impact, fostering innovation and long-term growth.

ICCA's participation in industry-focused events like Meetings Africa and the Association Day Conference, co-hosted with the South African National Convention Bureau, highlights its commitment to adding value for its African members. These collaborations create networking opportunities, foster industry development, and provide a platform to discuss key challenges and innovations in the MICE sector.

Additionally, ICCA supports Africa's MICE growth through tailored educational programs addressing innovation, capacity-building, and international best practices. These programs equip African stakeholders with the necessary skills to excel in an evolving global

market, ensuring the region remains competitive and enhances its profile on the global stage.

As Africa emerges as a key MICE destination, ICCA remains committed to driving growth, expanding knowledge, and supporting stakeholders in navigating the dynamic global meetings landscape.

Join the conversation

ICCA Africa Chapter Meeting:

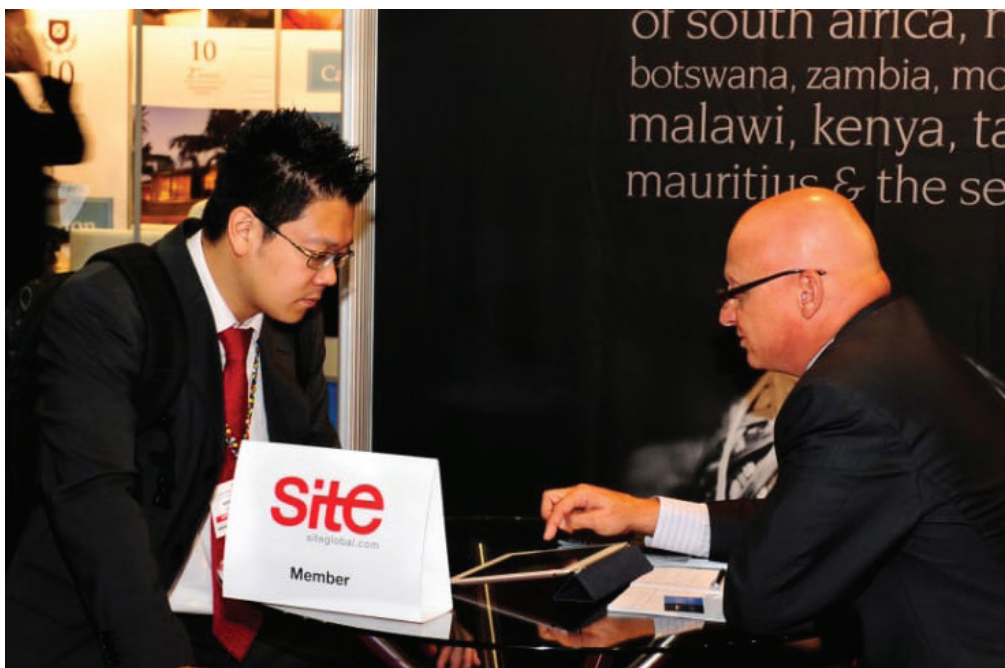
By Invitation Only

Date: 24 February 2025

Time: 10:00 - 11:30

Venue: Sandton Convention Centre - Boardroom 6/7

A Message from the Meetings Africa Business Matchmaking® team



The Meetings Africa Business Matchmaking® program has greatly surpassed expectations this year.

Not only have we scheduled more meetings than last year, but we've also significantly improved our response times to meeting requests, ensuring near-instant replies through email, WhatsApp, and calls to both exhibitors and buyers.

The goal is to create cooperative connections and realise business opportunities that mutually benefit both parties.

With the majority of schedules already packed, maximizing the program's potential comes down to preparing for the in-person interactions between

exhibitors and buyers at their stands.

In the coming days, we'll be sending out meeting calendars via email and WhatsApp. Keep an eye on these communications so you can prepare for your upcoming engagements.

Once onsite, you'll receive WhatsApp reminders for each confirmed meeting. You'll be able to respond with updates on whether you're on your way, running late, or need to cancel.

After each meeting, we'll also send a short WhatsApp survey to gather your feedback. We encourage you to rate the meeting as excellent, good, average, or indicate if it didn't happen.

Your input helps us understand the value you're getting



from the program and allows us to follow up with any missed meetings.

Our team will be onsite during the event, and one of our representatives will visit your stand to introduce us. We look forward to connecting with you there.

We're here to assist in any way!

What is Business Matchmaking®?

Business Matchmaking® is a method to identify, match and connect companies and people with common business interests, complementary services, expertise, technologies or business strengths.

9 key points from the Incentive Travel Index 2024 Survey

The Incentive Travel Index (ITI) 2024 Survey indicates a positive growth trajectory for the incentive travel industry through 2026.

The Incentive Travel Index (ITI) 2024 Survey provides valuable insights into destination preferences, program inclusions, budgeting, and the perceived strategic importance of incentive travel. This annual report is a collaborative effort between the Incentive Research Foundation (IRF) and the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE), in partnership with Oxford Economics.

For 2024, an online survey conducted globally from May to July engaged over 2,800 incentive travel professionals across five distinct roles: corporate end users, third-party agencies, DMCs, destination suppliers, and DMOs.

Here are 9 key points from the Incentive Travel Index 2024 Survey:

- Budget Allocation Trends:** In 2025, the average budget allocation for incentive travel programmes is expected to prioritise hotels (27%) and airfare (22%), with food and beverage costs at 18% and activities at 13%.
- Growth Expectations:** By 2026, 45% of buyers anticipate an increase in incentive travel activity compared to 2024, with 55% expecting spending increases to match inflation or enhance programs.
- Evolving Purpose:** Incentive travel is increasingly viewed as essential by senior leadership, with a focus on both ROI and cultural engagement,

reflecting a shift towards soft-power benefits like employee retention and company culture.

- AI Integration:** A significant portion of respondents (63%) believe that AI will be effectively utilised in incentive travel, particularly in planning, budgeting, and preparing programme materials.
- Destination Preferences:** Buyers are actively seeking new destinations, with 70% looking for options not previously used. Resorts and shorter-distance locations are gaining popularity.
- Challenges Ahead:** Rising costs and inflation are the top challenges faced by incentive travel professionals, followed by the need to attract and retain talent. Climate change and sustainability concerns are expected to grow in importance.
- Generational Shift:** Younger generations are anticipated to drive a “retool” of incentive travel, with 67% of respondents agreeing that this demographic will significantly influence future trends.
- Relationship Dynamics:** The relationship between buyers and suppliers is perceived as complex, with 48% of respondents indicating challenges in this area, particularly among incentive travel agencies.



- Programme Design Trends:** Traditional incentive programmes remain popular, but there is a notable increase in company-wide trips and broader events that cater to dispersed workforces, indicating a diversification in programme design.

For further details, please visit www.incentiveindex.com

Tip of the Day



Trade show veteran Elmarie Swanepoel, Business Development Manager for the CSIR ICC (Stand No. E4), shares her insights on maximizing sales opportunities at Meetings Africa 2025.

Design an eye-catching stand with clear branding (easy brand recognition) and an inviting set-up. Know your key selling points and have a concise pitch ready. Last but not least, follow up after the show.

A Warm Welcome to New Exhibitors

Meetings Africa 2025 proudly welcomes 85 new exhibitors to Africa's leading business events trade show. The inclusion of these new exhibitors highlights the continued relevance and impact of the show in positioning Africa as a dynamic and competitive MICE destination.

Among the newcomers are innovative product makers from Guinea, Eswatini and Zimbabwe, each highlighting the unique strengths of their regions.

Tobie Motsa
Mountain View International Hotel
Eswatini

“We're thrilled to be part of Meetings Africa 2025. This is an excellent opportunity to showcase Eswatini's cultural heritage, world-class facilities, and warm hospitality to the global business events market.”

Princesse Grovogui
Noom Hotel Conakry
Guinea

“Meetings Africa is a valuable platform for us to showcase Guinea's potential as a business events destination. As first-time exhibitors, our goal is to connect with key industry stakeholders, gain insights from experienced African destinations, and establish Guinea as an emerging player in the MICE sector.”

Bernadette Veldsman
Pure Africa
Zimbabwe

“Meetings Africa provides a vital platform to demonstrate Zimbabwe's world-class infrastructure and unforgettable experiences. The connections made here will drive growth and innovation in our industry.”