



# MeetEngland

IMPACT NETWORK

UNITING EXPERTS,  
ELEVATING EXCELLENCE

VisitEngland 

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# England: powered by knowledge and innovation

Conferences and business events are more than gatherings – they are engines of **knowledge exchange, innovation, and collaboration that drive economic growth**. In the UK alone, the business events industry contributes £46.95 billion to the economy each year, accounting for more than half of that value of all events in the country<sup>1</sup>. This reflects not only the scale of the sector, but also its growing influence in connecting people, industries and ideas on a global stage.

Increasingly, the success of a conference is shaped by its alignment with the expertise of the host destination. Research shows that **more than 80% of meetings now reflect a city or region's specialist sectors**<sup>2</sup>, highlighting a clear trend towards a sector-first approach when assessing the suitability of destinations. This alignment creates powerful opportunities: delegates gain deeper engagement, local stakeholders forge new partnerships, and industries accelerate collaboration that drives long-term progress.

England is uniquely placed to deliver this kind of **knowledge-driven impact**. Our country is home to world-renowned universities, research institutes, innovation hubs and thriving industry clusters. In Cambridge, global leaders in life sciences and biotechnology are shaping the future of healthcare. Manchester is pioneering advanced materials and digital innovation, while Liverpool continues to lead in health sciences, maritime innovation and creative research. Sheffield is driving excellence in advanced manufacturing and sustainable engineering, and Leeds is strengthening its position in healthcare innovation and data analytics. Bristol and the Midlands are hubs of aerospace and automotive engineering, while Nottingham is making strides in medical technology and sustainable design. Newcastle is advancing clean energy solutions, Brighton is fostering creativity and digital innovation along the South Coast, and London - with its financial services, tech sector and creative industries - continues to set the pace on a global stage.

For organisers, this means access to a **rich network of thought leaders and innovators** who can contribute to conference programmes, develop partnerships, and deliver mutual value to associations and host destinations.

Across England, convention bureaus, professional conference organisers and universities collaborate to connect associations with leading experts and world-class infrastructure. In many English destinations, these local and national champions come together through **ambassador programmes**, working in partnership to secure conferences and build lasting relationships between cities and their key sectors. In other cities, established **networks** and **advocates** play a similar role, supporting destinations in attracting important business events. Collectively, the impact of these programmes and networks with academic and industry leaders extends far beyond individual events – they drive innovation, investment and growth across the wider economy.

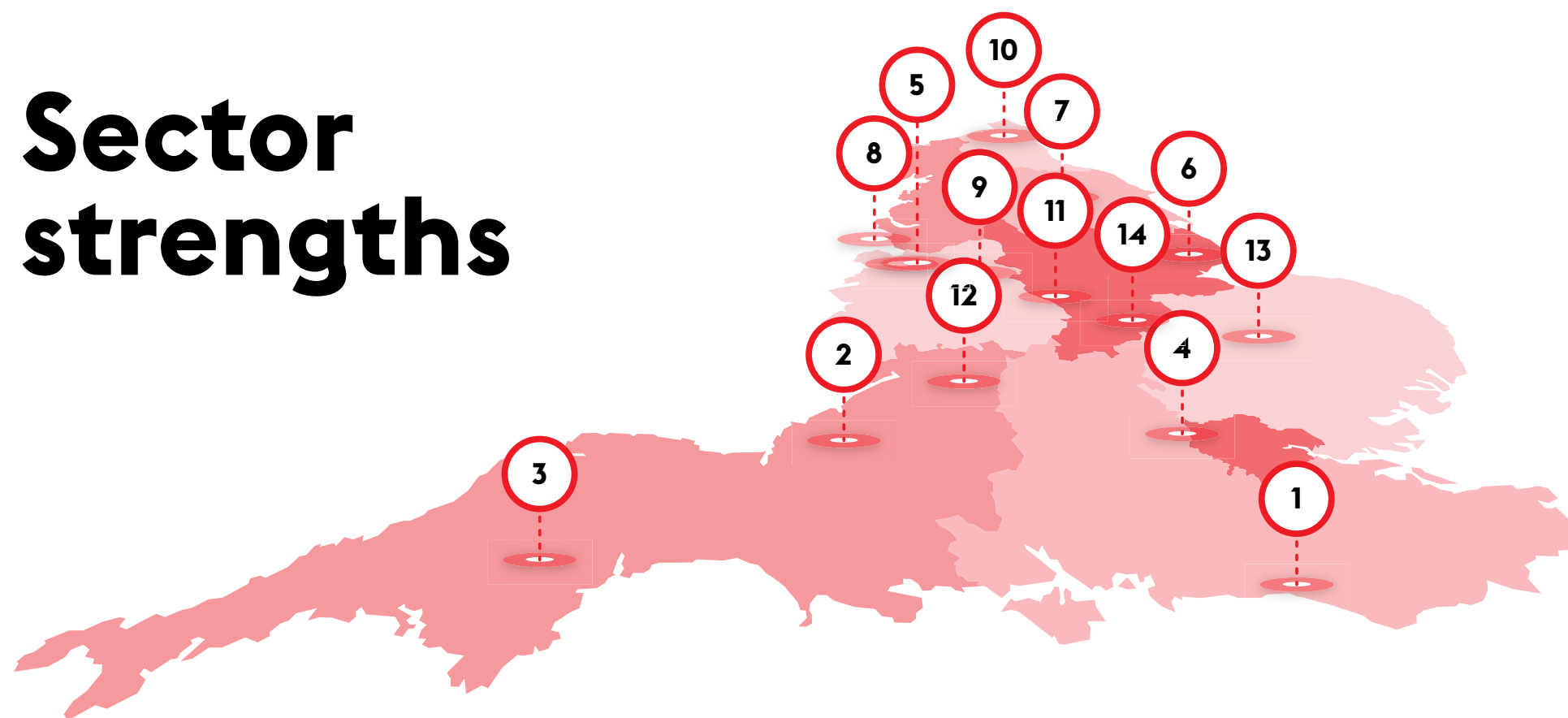


Initiatives such as the **MeetEngland Impact Network** celebrate and support these local and national leaders – academics, scientists, clinicians, entrepreneurs – whose leadership not only helps attract conferences to England but also ensures they leave a meaningful legacy for host communities, industries and the wider economy.

<sup>1</sup> Source: UK Events Report, December 2025

<sup>2</sup> Sectors Power Meetings in 2025 | SFA Connect

# Sector strengths



## South of England

- 1. Brighton**
  - Creative & Cultural Industries
  - Digital & Technology
  - Environmental Technologies & Sustainability
  - Health & Life Sciences
- 2. Bristol & Bath**
  - Aerospace & Advanced Engineering
  - Clean & Renewable Energy
  - Financial & Business Services
  - Life Sciences
  - Technology, Creative & Digital Industries
- 3. Devon**
  - Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering (incl. Photonics & Microelectronics)
  - Agri-Food & Fisheries
  - Clean & Renewable Energy
  - Marine
- 4. London**
  - Creative & Cultural Industries
  - Environmental Sustainability
  - Financial & Business Services
  - Life Sciences
  - Technology & Innovation

## North of England

- 5. Blackpool**
  - Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering (incl. Materials)
  - Aerospace
  - Digital & Technology
  - Energy & Clean Technologies
  - Food & Drink
- 6. Hull**
  - Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering
  - Clean & Renewable Energy (incl. Offshore Wind)
  - Creative & Digital Industries
  - Health & Life Sciences (incl. Pharmaceuticals)
  - Ports, Logistics & Supply Chain
- 7. Leeds**
  - Advanced Manufacturing
  - Digital & Technology
  - Financial & Professional Services
  - Health & Life Sciences
- 8. Liverpool**
  - Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering
  - Creative & Cultural Industries
  - Digital & Technology
  - Health & Life Sciences (incl. Pharmaceuticals)
- 9. Manchester**
  - Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering
  - Clean & Renewable Energy
  - Creative & Digital Industries
  - Financial, Professional & Business Services
  - Health & Life Sciences
- 10. Newcastle**
  - Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering
  - Creative & Digital Industries
  - Energy, Environment & Sustainability
  - Health & Life Sciences
  - Space & Security Technologies
- 11. Sheffield**
  - Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering
  - Digital & Technology
  - Energy & Sustainability
  - Health & Wellbeing
  - Sport

## Central England

- 12. Birmingham**
  - Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering
  - Automotive & Future Mobility
  - Clean & Renewable Energy
  - Financial, Professional & Business Services
  - Health & Life Sciences
- 13. Cambridge**
  - Advanced Manufacturing
  - Agriculture & Agri-Tech
  - Clean & Environmental Technologies
  - Digital & Technology
  - Health & Life Sciences (incl. Pharmaceuticals)
- 14. Nottingham**
  - Advanced Manufacturing (incl. Materials)
  - Agri-Food & Logistics
  - Creative & Digital Industries
  - Financial & Business Services
  - Life Sciences



# The MeetEngland Impact Network

The MeetEngland Impact Network is a strategic national initiative designed to elevate and showcase the valuable work of ambassadors, advocates, academic and sector leaders throughout England. It acts as a unifying umbrella, connecting individual efforts to create a stronger, more visible impact.

The Network highlights long-established city ambassador programmes, as well as other city partnership programmes, that open doors to sector and academic communities within their destinations. These leaders and networks are critical in spearheading new bids and potential events for England, demonstrating that:

**“England offers more than just venues and spaces; we provide access to a thriving ecosystem of expertise and collaboration.”**

The core purposes of the Network are to:

- **Actively promote England's rich tapestry of academic and sector leaders**, highlighting the diverse intellectual and professional excellence available to attract and secure prestigious business events.
- **Clearly demonstrate England's exceptional access to high-quality experts** across a wide array of key sectors, reinforcing our position as a global leader in business events.
- **Facilitate and enhance collaborative efforts among city ambassadors**, advocates and local leaders, creating a more unified and supportive environment to grow, attract, and retain business events across the entirety of England.
- **Publicly celebrate the profound impact and contributions** these dedicated ambassadors, advocates and local leaders make within their respective fields and cities, bringing their achievements to national prominence.

In the next section, you will find an overview of the Network's key destinations, their sector strengths, and success stories from their sector and academic networks through ambassador or partnership initiatives – offering a firsthand view of how these collaborations deliver real results for events, communities, and industries across England.

Note: destinations have been ordered North to South.



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# Newcastle

NewcastleGateshead is a destination of landmarks: take in seven spectacular bridges crossing the River Tyne, Antony Gormley's contemporary sculpture Angel of the North and the gleaming shell of The Glasshouse as you make your way to your next meeting or convention. Over 2,000 years of history and a rich industrial past meet scientific research and digital innovation in the vibrant North-East, and rest assured you'll be given a warm Geordie greeting!

## Newcastle Gateshead Conference Ambassador Programme

**W:** [www.meetnewcastle Gateshead.com/bid-for-an-event/](http://www.meetnewcastle Gateshead.com/bid-for-an-event/)

**Launched in:** 2002 (relaunched 2014)

**Active members:** 1200 in total (active numbers vary)

## Programme description

The NewcastleGateshead Conference Ambassador Programme is one of England's most established and successful models for attracting high-value national and international conferences. Delivered in partnership by the NewcastleGateshead Convention Bureau, Newcastle University and Northumbria University, the programme unites leading academics, clinicians and industry experts to champion the region's expertise on the global stage. Ambassadors draw on their professional reputation and networks to secure events aligned with the area's recognised strengths in life sciences, healthcare, sustainability, energy, and creative and digital industries. Supported by the Convention Bureau from bid development to delivery, the programme ensures every conference reflects the city's authentic expertise while creating meaningful legacies that drive innovation and investment, showcasing NewcastleGateshead as a world-class destination for knowledge-led events.

## Examples of prestigious conferences in Newcastle:

- 38th Annual Conference of The European Society for Biomaterials (2029) – *Science*
- European Conference in Politics Gender (2026) – *Professional & Business Services*
- International Society of Political Psychology Annual Meeting (2026) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- 43rd Annual Conference of the International Society for Clinical Biostatistics (2022) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- 41st Annual Meeting of the European Thyroid Association (2018) – *Health & Life Sciences*

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## Ambassador Success Story

### Dr Vartul Sangal

Assistant Professor in Cellular and Molecular Sciences

Northumbria University



### Why did you feel it was important to bring Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics (BISMiS) to Newcastle?

Newcastle upon Tyne has been at the heart of innovation in prokaryotic systematics due to pioneering work of Prof Michael Goodfellow (1941–2024). He was one of the founders of BISMiS Society and established extensive international collaborations and mentored numerous PhD students who continue to advance his scientific vision. Therefore, hosting this conference in Newcastle would honour his legacy while bringing together the global community he helped to build.

### How did working with the city convention bureau or destination team help in attracting or delivering the event?

This conference will be organised from 29 June – 2 July 2027 at Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne. I believe that this event will be highly beneficial by developing new collaborations between UK researchers and global experts and will also contribute economically by supporting local businesses (catering and accommodation) and tourism (sightseeing activities). I continue to work with colleagues at Venues at Northumbria and NewcastleGateshead Convention Bureau to organise this event successfully.

### What advice would you give to other potential ambassadors who might want to support bids in the future?

It has been a great experience thus far, both professionally and personally. This programme not only contributed to a successful bid for organising the conference in 2027 but also provided me with the opportunities to connect with experts in the field, making the effort worthwhile. Therefore, I would strongly encourage others to become ambassadors.

### What are you most excited about for the future of your city as a hub for business events and knowledge exchange?

This event will build upon the excellence in microbiology and prokaryotic systematics at Northumbria and other North-East universities, making the city well-positioned to host such a specialised international conference that will drive knowledge exchange and foster research partnerships. Hopefully, the combination of strong academic institutions, competitive hosting costs, and excellent connectivity will attract more research-focused events to be organised in Newcastle upon Tyne in the future.



# Blackpool

Predominantly known as a British holiday favourite, Blackpool is famous for its seaside culture, entertainment and neon lights. The region is steeped in history, art, sport and music venues alongside miles of golden coastline. Blackpool is home to outstanding architecture and offers exciting venues of all shapes and sizes, from the Blackpool Tower Ballroom to the Winter Gardens Blackpool event space and convention centre.



## Meet Blackpool Ambassador Programme

**W:** <https://meetblackpool.com/ambassadors/>

**Launched in:** 2022

**Active members:** 4

## Programme description

Established only a few years ago, the Meet Blackpool Conference Ambassador Programme empowers local academics, industry leaders and professionals to showcase Blackpool as a dynamic destination for regional, national and international conferences. Ambassadors represent a diverse range of sectors, helping to raise the city's profile, attract high-value events and drive economic growth. Meet Blackpool provides tailored, end-to-end support for ambassadors and organisers – from bid preparation and venue selection to accommodation, promotion and delegate welcome. Working in partnership with local experts, professional organisers and award-winning venues, the programme ensures every event delivers a seamless experience while highlighting the strengths of Blackpool's institutions, research and thriving visitor economy.

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# Leeds

Leeds is home to exciting venues including four leading universities, the First Direct Arena and the Royal Armouries, making it a popular conference destination. With rejuvenated city squares and cosmopolitan museums as well as expertise in medicine, healthcare, professional services, digital and manufacturing, Leeds is the second largest financial centre outside London and made for events.



## Leeds Conference Ambassador

**W:** [www.conferenceleeds.co.uk/ambassadors/](http://www.conferenceleeds.co.uk/ambassadors/)

## Programme description

Leeds has a strong reputation for delivering ambitious, high-impact conferences, supported by the city's collaborative #TeamLeeds approach. Rather than a formal programme, Conference Leeds works with a network of thought leaders, industry specialists and sector leaders who champion the city and help attract national and international events. These ambassadors draw on Leeds' strengths in healthcare, finance, digital innovation and manufacturing, using their expertise and connections to shape compelling bids and bring transformational conferences to the city. In return, ambassadors benefit from expanded networks, enhanced visibility and opportunities to showcase their leadership on a global stage. With more than 35 years' experience supporting major events, Conference Leeds provides guidance at every stage, ensuring delegates enjoy a truly exceptional experience in this walkable, well-connected city.

## Examples of prestigious conferences in Leeds:

- International Association of Music Libraries UK and Ireland Annual Study Weekend (2024) – *Creative Industries*
- Heads of Universities Centres of Biomedical Annual Conference (2024) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- UK France Forum (2024) – *Politics & Professional Services*
- Urban Diplomacy Partnership Conference (2023) – *Professional Services*

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# Hull

Named the UK's 2017 City of Culture, Hull is a maritime city with a vibrant conference scene, unique venues and a flavour of historic Olde England. From the lively cosmopolitan waterfront to the rugged East Yorkshire heritage coastline and tranquil Yorkshire Wolds, famously captured by artist David Hockney, this destination offers event planners the best of all worlds.



## VHEY Champions

**W:** <https://www.visithull.org/conferences/our-team/conference-champions/>

**Launched in:** 2025

**Active members:** 17

## Programme description

Launched in March 2025, the Hull Conference Champions Programme is a new initiative designed to engage local academics, business leaders and sector specialists in attracting national and international conferences to the city. Delivered in partnership with the University of Hull, the programme is already gaining momentum, with 17 active champions supporting several live bids and a successful first networking event held in October 2025. As the programme grows, it will play a key role in showcasing Hull's strengths in renewable energy, healthcare, manufacturing and the digital industries, driving long-term economic impact and raising the city's profile as a forward-thinking destination for business events.

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# Liverpool

A city with unique convention spaces and a thriving nightlife, rich maritime history, world-renowned musical heritage as the birthplace of The Beatles, and two of the Premier League's biggest football clubs. Easily accessible by air or rail, Liverpool offers four universities, two strikingly different cathedrals and a warm hospitality guaranteed to get delegates talking.



## Club Liverpool

**W:** <https://clubliverpool.co.uk/>

**Launched in:** 2015

**Active members:** 300

## Programme description

The Club Liverpool Ambassador Programme is a dynamic network of more than 300 academics, medics and professionals who volunteer their time to help attract national and international conferences to the Liverpool City Region. Working closely with the Liverpool Convention Bureau, ambassadors play a vital role in securing major events that showcase the city's expertise and innovation. Since its launch, the programme has helped win over 100 conferences, generating an economic impact of more than £100 million. Beyond the numbers, Club Liverpool fosters collaboration across sectors and institutions, strengthening Liverpool's global reputation and building international connections, ensuring Liverpool's influence is felt long after each event concludes.

## Examples of prestigious conferences in Liverpool:

- International Particle Accelerator Conference (2029) – *Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering*
- European Academy of Paediatric Dentistry Congress (2026) - *Dentistry*
- World Congress of the International Academy of Oral Oncology (2025) - *Dentistry*
- European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology Annual Meeting (2024) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- International Congress of the European Society of Paediatric Otorhinolaryngology (2023) – *Health & Life Sciences*

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# Manchester

The Gateway to the North, where Rolls met Royce, the city that split the atom and changed the world, Manchester is an edgy city where innovation never stands still. Home to one of Europe's largest academic campuses with an array of unique venues and an award-winning convention centre, Manchester's extensive conference choice has established the city as one of Europe's most exciting business tourism destinations.

## Manchester Conference Ambassador Programme

**W:** <https://www.meetinmanchester.com/ambassadors/>

**Launched in:** 1996 (relaunched 2023)

**Active members:** 430

## Programme description

The Manchester Conference Ambassador Programme is a long-standing collaboration between the city, its universities and industry partners. This informal network of local champions – known as Mbassadors – brings together influential academics, researchers and business leaders who actively promote Manchester as a leading destination for conferences and events. Designed to complement professional commitments, the programme is flexible and inclusive, with no formal obligations. Manchester's ambassadors play a vital role in securing major national and international conferences, supporting knowledge exchange, and raising the profile of the city's institutions and research excellence. Their collective efforts help drive innovation, strengthen Manchester's international profile and ensure the city remains at the forefront of global knowledge exchange.

## Examples of prestigious conferences in Manchester:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • European College of Sport Science Annual Congress (2027) – <i>Sport</i>  | its Applications (2023) – <i>Digital &amp; Technology</i>  |
| • 18th International Society for the Study of Drug Policy (ISSDP) Annual Conference (2025) – <i>Health &amp; Life Sciences</i> | • British Society for Gynaecological Endoscopy (BSGE) Annual Scientific Meeting (2023) – <i>Health &amp; Life Sciences</i> |
| • IEEE International Symposium on Power Line Communications and  | • International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA) Congress (2023) – <i>Creative Industries</i>                        |

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## Ambassador Success Story

### Dr Rebecca Askew

Reader in Criminology and Director of Drugs, Policy and Social Change (DPSC)

Manchester Metropolitan University



### Can you tell us a bit about the ISSDP and its 2025 conference in Manchester?

The International Society for the Study of Drug Policy (ISSDP) is the largest global network of drug policy scholars, known for its strong research focus and interdisciplinary approach, spanning fields like criminology, sociology, public health, and economics, and utilising diverse methodologies. We're thrilled with the feedback from the conference; delegates truly felt the "Mancunian welcome" we aimed for. As the 18th edition of the ISSDP conference, it was wonderful for it to "come of age" in our city.

This year's theme was social justice, exploring everything from equitable access to treatment to drug policy reform and its socioeconomic impact. We covered subthemes like drug markets, harm reduction, and methodological innovation. We specifically aimed to encourage researchers from underrepresented countries, and it was fantastic to see strong representation from Latin America. A key goal was also to provide a platform for early career researchers and to foster knowledge exchange and networking beyond academia, connecting with practitioners, policymakers, and journalists. We believe we delivered on ISSDP's reputation for inspiring and cutting-edge discussions.

### What benefits did hosting the ISSDP Conference bring to you personally, your research group, the university, and the wider academic community?

The conference has put DPSC, Man Met and the city on the map for a global network of drug policy scholars. I think it was a great opportunity to showcase our research, make new connections and invite collaborations. Plus, it gave local practitioners and those with lived and living experience to participate in knowledge exchange. Man Met is a university that champions research with impact and DPSC strives to ensure our research findings reaches the public and community audience.

### What does being an "Mbassador" for Manchester mean to you, and what would be your key message to others considering bidding to host events in Manchester?

I am so proud to call Manchester my home and I have enjoyed the opportunity to reconnect with the city and show delegates around. I have wanted to host the ISSDP conference for a few years, but I was hesitant due to the amount of work it would take alongside my already busy schedule. But, when Anthony got in touch with me and told me about the support that we would get from the Manchester Convention Bureau and its partners, that finally gave me the push to go for it.

# Sheffield

From transforming the world with Stainless Steel production in 1913 to producing Olympic legends like Jessica Ennis and music stars like the Arctic Monkeys, Pulp and the Human League, Sheffield is a creative city bursting with ideas and energy. One of England's greenest cities and woven into the stunning Peak District National Park, Sheffield blends bustling city culture with outdoor adventure, making it a unique business events destination.

## Sheffield (Conference) Ambassador Programme

**W:** <https://www.welcometosheffield.co.uk/conference/ambassador-programme/>

**Launched in:** 2009

**Active members:** 300

## Programme description

The Sheffield Conference Ambassador Programme is one of England's longest-running initiatives dedicated to attracting major national and international conferences to the city. The programme supports academics, medical specialists and industry experts in bidding for and hosting conferences that showcase Sheffield's world-class research and sector expertise. With around 300 active ambassadors, it has played a vital role in strengthening Sheffield's position as a leading conference destination. Beyond securing events, the programme fosters collaboration across the city's universities, venues and businesses, creating opportunities for innovation and investment that not only enhance the city's economic prosperity but also strengthen Sheffield's reputation for excellence in research and enterprise.

## Examples of prestigious conferences in Sheffield:

- Clinical Genetics Society Conference (2025) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- Global Child Health Technology Conference (2025) – *Health & Technology*
- European Society for Cognitive Psychology (2025) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- 20th International Celiac Disease Symposium (2024) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- International Stillbirth Alliance Conference (2023) – *Health & Life Sciences*

**Contact details:** Gemma Tissington, Ambassador Manager, [Gemma.tissington@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:Gemma.tissington@sheffield.gov.uk)



## Ambassador Success Story

### Professor Paul Dimitri

Professor of Child Health Technology, The University of Sheffield; Professor of Child Health, Sheffield Hallam University; Consultant in Paediatric Endocrinology, Sheffield

**Children's NHS Foundation Trust**



**How has working with Marketing Sheffield and its ambassador programme helped you attract major events and create long-term impact?** Working with Marketing Sheffield has been instrumental in bringing major national and international child health events to the city - most notably the UK's, and very likely the world's first, Child Health Technology Conference (CHT). Starting with CHT2021 and now running annually, their support was central to securing Sheffield as the host city for this pioneering event, which has now welcomed 171 speakers and 607 delegates from 33 countries, each showcasing the most advanced and impactful research in child health technology. The conference has rapidly become a global focal point for innovation in paediatric health, and Sheffield's role as host has positioned the city at the forefront of this emerging field.

Our collaboration with Marketing Sheffield extends far beyond a single event. Together, we are working to deliver a world first: the 42,000 sq ft National Centre for Child Health Technology (NCCHT). This landmark development will bring together industry partners, universities, healthcare professionals, and critically, children and young people themselves. The centre will serve as a hub for co design, research, and innovation, accelerating the development of technologies that improve the health and healthcare of children and young people. Marketing Sheffield has played a key role in shaping the narrative, strengthening the city's profile, and helping us articulate the global significance of this project.

**What kind of legacy do you think these events have created?** The legacy of these events is already visible. Locally, they have strengthened Sheffield's reputation as a centre of excellence for child health technology, attracting new partnerships, investment, and academic collaborations. Academically, they have helped cement the city's role as a convenor of global expertise, creating new research networks and opportunities for cross-disciplinary innovation. Within the wider industry, the conferences and the forthcoming NCCHT have signalled that Sheffield is not only a host city but a leader, shaping the future of child health technology and influencing national and international agendas.

**What advice would you give to other potential ambassadors who might want to support bids in the future?** For future ambassadors considering supporting bids, my advice is simple: embrace the partnership fully. Marketing Sheffield brings expertise, networks, and a deep understanding of how to position the city effectively. Work collaboratively, be open to their guidance, and involve them early in the process. Their ability to connect you with venues, suppliers, civic partners, and promotional channels is invaluable. Most importantly, remember that being an ambassador is not just about securing an event, it is about showcasing Sheffield's strengths, building long-term relationships, and creating opportunities that leave a lasting impact on the city and your field.



# Nottingham

Once voted the friendliest city in Europe, Nottingham is best known around the world as the home of the legendary Robin Hood. Today it is a destination for culture, heritage, shopping and sports. Among urban centres and century-old forests, choose from a multitude of academic spaces, Grade II listed buildings and stately homes. Nottingham has it all.



## Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Ambassador Programme

**W:** [www.meetinnottingham.co.uk/ambassadors/](http://www.meetinnottingham.co.uk/ambassadors/)

**Launched in:** 2025

**Active members:** 36

## Programme description

The Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Ambassador Programme brings together influential local leaders, industry figures, academics, and professionals to champion the region as a destination for national and international conferences, business events, and potential investment.

Ambassadors use their expertise, networks and professional reputation to shape bids, promote the region's sector strengths – including life sciences, medtech, clean energy and the creative industries – and attract high-profile events that drive economic growth. Their advocacy plays a vital role in securing conferences that showcase local innovation, generate inward investment and strengthen research collaboration. By uniting champions from across diverse sectors, the programme enhances the region's competitive edge and builds long-term visibility for Nottingham & Nottinghamshire on the national and global stage.

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# Cambridge

Elegant and compact, Cambridge boasts a blend of history, scientific discovery, high-tech innovation, culture and beauty. With the stunning architecture of the renowned University of Cambridge, green parks and the River Cam winding through its heart, Cambridge is a unique and inspiring destination.



## Cambridge Conference Ambassador Programme

**W:** <https://www.meet-cambridge.com/events-services/ambassador-programme/>

**Launched in:** 2012

**Active members:** 7

## Programme description

Established by Meet Cambridge, the Cambridge Conference Ambassador Programme harnesses the expertise and networks of leading academics, researchers, clinicians and industry specialists to attract national and international conferences to the city. With 38 ambassadors in total representing sectors such as life sciences, engineering, law and the arts, the programme has helped secure more than 60 major events, welcoming thousands of delegates from the UK and overseas. These conferences have generated significant economic impact, strengthened Cambridge's international profile and fostered long-term collaboration between local and global partners. Through initiatives such as Meet Up & Make a Difference, the programme also champions positive legacies, generating lasting benefits for both the local economy and the wider community.

## Examples of prestigious conferences in Cambridge:

- World Congress on Family Law & Children's Rights (2025) – *Professional & Business Services*
- International Seed Testing Association Congress (2024) – *Agri-Food & Science*
- International Neurotrauma Symposium (2024) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- International Association of Music Libraries Conference (2023) – *Creative Industries & Education*

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# Birmingham

Birmingham is a dynamic, creative city and constantly evolving. England's natural meeting place, this centrally-located city is a crossroads for culture and diverse influences on art, music and cuisine. Birmingham's endless energy springs from fresh thinking and innovation, making it a leading lifestyle and business destination with sectors of expertise in digital technologies, data-driven healthcare and advanced engineering.

## Conference Ambassador Network

**W:** [www.meetbirmingham.com/can](http://www.meetbirmingham.com/can)

**Launched in:** 2022

**Active members:** 104

## Programme description

Launched alongside the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, the Birmingham and West Midlands Conference Ambassador Network (CAN) unites the region's leading academics, innovators and business professionals to attract major national and international conferences. With more than 100 active ambassadors, the network provides a platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange across key growth sectors. Supported by the Birmingham & West Midlands Convention Bureau, CAN ambassadors have already contributed to more than 25 successful bids, helping to showcase the region's expertise, innovation and pioneering spirit on a global stage. Through engagement activities, networking events and ambassador storytelling, the network continues to forge partnerships that showcase the region's pioneering spirit, attract new opportunities and leave a meaningful imprint on the West Midlands' business landscape.

### Examples of prestigious conferences in Birmingham:

- International Ceramic Conference (2028) – *Advanced Manufacturing*
- Intelligent Transport Systems World Conference (2027) – *Automotive & Future Mobility*
- European Robotics Forum (2027) – *Digital & Technologies*
- Society of Vertebrate Palaeontology Annual Meeting (2025) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- World Congress on Railway Research (2022) – *Transport*

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## Ambassador Success Story

### Karol Janik

Robotics & Automation  
Technology Manager

**Manufacturing Technology Centre**



### What inspired you to become involved as an ambassador for Birmingham & the West Midlands?

I wanted to champion the West Midlands' strengths in Robotics, Autonomous Systems and advanced manufacturing on a global stage. With an incredible industrial history and fastest tech growing sector in the UK, Birmingham and the West Midlands deserve a stronger recognition. Representing the region through the Conference Ambassador Network allows me to spotlight the regional capabilities leading to attracting investment, catalysing innovation, and inspiring the next generation of roboticists and technology innovators.

### What makes Birmingham a great place to host conferences and business events in your sector?

Birmingham and the surrounding region combine accessible world-class venues such as the ICC and NEC with a thriving industrial and deep tech ecosystem. It offers a high-calibre engineering and research community, from the MTC to the University of Birmingham, supported by agile venue and city services through the Birmingham & West Midlands Convention Bureau.

### What are you most excited about for the future of your city as a hub for business events and knowledge exchange?

I look forward to Birmingham's continued leadership as a premier destination for Robotics, Autonomous Systems and Advanced Manufacturing. With facilities like ICC Birmingham and a thriving innovation ecosystem led by entities such as the MTC and University of Birmingham, the city is well placed to attract future global forums fostering sustained collaboration, economic growth, and technical breakthroughs in robotics and other new technologies.

# Bristol & Bath

Feats of engineering, Regency architecture and a thriving harbour come together in Bristol. As the largest city in the South West and a UNESCO City of Film, with Bath on its doorstep, a UNESCO Heritage Site, home to the Roman spas and the only natural hot springs in Britain, this region is a thriving metropolis brimming with creativity, history and heritage. It's the perfect business events destination.

## Meet Bristol & Bath Conference Ambassador Programme

**W:** [www.visitwest.co.uk/meet/how-we-can-help/ambassadors](http://www.visitwest.co.uk/meet/how-we-can-help/ambassadors)

## Programme description

Meet Bristol & Bath is the official Convention Bureau for Bristol, Bath, and the wider West of England region. As a not-for-profit organisation, our mission is to support event organisers in bringing conferences, meetings, and business events to our vibrant and diverse destination. All our services are provided on a complimentary basis, ensuring that organisers have access to expert local knowledge and tailored assistance throughout every stage of the planning process.

We are equipped to help with events of any scale, from small meetings to large international conferences, and we pride ourselves on offering flexible, personalised guidance. Our support begins with understanding your event objectives and connecting you with the venues, suppliers, and opportunities that best align with your goals.

## Examples of prestigious conferences in Bristol and Bath:

- The Association of Independent Festivals (AIF) (2025/2026) – *Creative Industries*
- The Wild Summit UK (2025) – *Environment & Agri-Food*
- The International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) (2024) – *Mathematics*
- The Blue Earth Summit (2021/2022/2023) – *Environment & Sustainability*

**Contact details:** Helen Applin, Head of Business Events, [helen.applin@meetbristolbath.co.uk](mailto:helen.applin@meetbristolbath.co.uk)

## Ambassador Success Story

### Savita Willmott

Chief Executive

The Natural History Consortium



### Why did you feel it was important to bring the Wild Summit 2025 to Bristol?

We worked hard to encourage the conference to come to Bristol! It was the first time a major national summit of this type was being created for the nature sector, and we knew that it would allow the extensive and long-standing environmental work in the city to be showcased on a national stage. It also felt exciting, topical and important - we just really wanted to be involved! We were able to forge a connection and partnership with the organisers (who were originally considering another location) and work closely with them as delivery partners. We knew - and were right - that the event would bring national politicians, national organisations and national broadsheet coverage to the region alongside forging connections between a huge variety of organisations.

### What was the highlight or proudest moment of hosting the event in your city?

Can I pick two? First, we were able to use the event to support policy development work in the city, and the region's Mayor hosted a breakfast to kick off the event alongside releasing a press notice that outlined current and future commitment for nature to support the region's growth. The business breakfast was absolutely packed and led straight into the rest of the conference - which was completely sold out! The second was bringing in 10% of the audience from local communities, under-represented groups and small charities through a bursary scheme and subsidised ticket policy.

### How did the conference benefit your field, your institution, or your wider professional community?

It was critical to bring the nature sector together in 2025 - the theme of the conference was 30 x 30 (our nation's targets to safeguard 30% of our land and sea for nature by 2030). The conference brought experts, communities, conservation experts, researchers and campaigners together to take stock - what needed to happen in the next 5 years to meet our ambition? As local delivery partners, we were able to super-charge our professional networks and also build our own capacity for supporting larger events.

### How did working with the city convention bureau or destination team help in attracting or delivering the event?

The services provided by Meet Bristol & Bath and VisitWest are incredibly important for a small charity such as ours. We are in touch with them multiple times throughout the year for advice, venue-finding, and promotion of our activity.



# London

England's cosmopolitan capital is home to one of the largest world economies with leading sectors in digital and technology, life sciences, financial and professional services and the creative industries. From high-tech venues to incentive experiences that bring to life over 2,000 years of history, immerse yourself in the English capital that will always inspire.



## London Convention Bureau and sector advocates

**W:** <http://www.conventionbureau.london/>

## Programme description

London is one of the world's leading cities for international congresses, supported by a powerful ecosystem of academic excellence, business innovation and global sector leadership. Although London & Partners does not operate a formal ambassador programme, the London Convention Bureau has built a strong network of sector advocates drawn from the city's universities, research institutions, teaching hospitals and world-leading industries including life sciences, finance, technology and the creative sectors. These experts play a pivotal role in shaping compelling bids, identifying new opportunities and promoting London on the global stage as a place to meet, study, work and invest. Their insight and advocacy strengthen London's global competitiveness and help secure high-profile conferences that showcase the city's expertise, drive innovation and create meaningful impact for industries and communities across the capital.

### Examples of prestigious conferences in London:

- International Laparoscopic Liver Society World Congress – ILLS (2030) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- 7th Congress of International Advanced HBP Surgery – ISLS (2027) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- IFLA World Library and Information Congress (2027) – *Education*
- IEEE International Symposium on Circuits and Systems (2025) – *Engineering & Technology*
- 40th International Conference on Robotics and Automation - ICRA (2023) – *Technology & Innovation*

**Contact details:** Suzanne Singleton, Head of Associations & Citywide Bids, [ssingleton@londonandpartners.com](mailto:ssingleton@londonandpartners.com)

# Devon

Away days in the South West conjure up idyllic images of cream teas, charming fishing villages and fine dining along the English Riviera. With two National Parks and the jaw-dropping Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, it's hard to believe you're just two hours from London. Home to the Met Office, Russell Group and four leading universities, as well as luxurious incentives to extend your stay, makes Devon the complete conference package.



## MeetDevon and sector advocates

**W:** [www.meetdevon.org](http://www.meetdevon.org)

## Programme description

Meet Devon works in partnership with leading businesses, the University of Exeter, the English Riviera and local councils to attract national and international business events to the region. Recognising the value of conferences and meetings as drivers of year-round economic growth, the team collaborates closely with sector leaders and academics to showcase Devon's strengths in clean energy, marine innovation and environmental sustainability. A new Devon Ambassador Scheme is being developed to formalise this collaboration, engaging local champions to promote the county's expertise and quality of life. Through initiatives such as Meet English Riviera, a dedicated sub-brand of Meet Devon focused on promoting the area and its International Convention Centre, Meet Devon continues to highlight the region's capacity for hosting major events and its position as an outstanding place to live, visit and do business.

### Examples of prestigious conferences in Devon:

- Historic Railways Association (2024 / 2026 / 2028) – *Transport*
- Gasket Guy Skittles Events (2026) – *Sport*
- Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) Event (2025) – *Food & Drink*
- The National Youngstock Conference (2024) – *Agri-Food*
- South West Bio DTP Conference (2024) – *Health & Life Sciences*

**Contact details:** Sally Everton, Director, [sally@meetdevon.org](mailto:sally@meetdevon.org)



# Brighton

Brighton is a seaside destination with great energy and creativity where you can leave feeling refreshed and inspired. Known as 'London-by-the-sea' for its cosmopolitan cultural offerings, Regency architecture and efficient transport links to the capital, Brighton is a compact city with much to offer.



## VisitBrighton Ambassador Programme

**W:** [www.visitbrighton.com/conferences/ambassador-programme](http://www.visitbrighton.com/conferences/ambassador-programme)

**Launched in:** 2008

**Active members:** 150

## Programme description

The VisitBrighton Ambassador Programme inspires and supports local academics, medical professionals and industry leaders to attract national and international conferences to the city. Recognising that over 75% of international events are secured through the influence of a local ambassador, the programme plays a vital role in positioning Brighton as a hub for collaboration, innovation and creativity. VisitBrighton provides free, tailored support at every stage of the bidding process – from sourcing venues and preparing proposals to organising site visits and accommodation. Since 2022, ambassador-led events have generated an estimated £14 million in economic impact, delivering lasting benefits for Brighton's visitor economy, local communities and key sectors.

### Examples of prestigious conferences in Brighton:

- Network of Early Career Researchers in Sustainability Transitions (2025) – *Environmental Technologies & Sustainability*
- Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine (2024) – *Health & Life Sciences*
- International Workshop on Weak Interactions and Neutrinos (2025) - *Physics*
- UK Literacy Association Conference (2024) – *Education*
- Society for Academic Primary Care Conference (2023) – *Health & Life Sciences*

**Contact details:** Darren Johnson, Convention Bureau Manager,  
[Darren.Johnson@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:Darren.Johnson@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

## Ambassador Success Story

### Fabrizio Salvatore

Professor of Physics

University of Sussex



### What inspired you to become involved as an ambassador for Brighton?

Since I joined the University of Sussex in 2009, I wanted to make everything I could to put the University and the city of Brighton on the 'map' of the important scientific events in my field (Particle Physics). For this reason, whenever possible I have put forward Brighton and the University of Sussex for several international particle physics conferences/workshops, with notable success.

### How do you think the ambassador programme helps strengthen connections between local experts and the global community?

Sharing experiences (and expertise) is crucial for the good organisation of an event. Having a community of ambassadors would be extremely useful in identifying the right venue for the right amount of people, the best possible accommodation considering different necessities (low budget for PhD students, higher end accommodation for distinguished guests, etc), restaurants that cater for various dietary requirements, etc.

### How did you first get involved in supporting event bids?

I have organised several national and international events, with participants ranging from 30 to 250. As an active member of the ATLAS Experiment at CERN, I have organised both international workshops to bring together the experiment's community, as well as international conferences on the topic of particle physics. I am currently in the International Organisation Committee of a large bi-annual particle physics detector conference (the CALOR conference series), and I was successful in bringing the conference to Brighton in May 2022.

### What are you most excited about for the future of your city as a hub for business events and knowledge exchange?

There is a lot to do in the city, and loads is being done to improve the city as a whole, with several big improvement works ongoing (from improving the seafront, to improving the traffic in the city centre). Bringing large events (especially international ones) would be crucial to keep improving the city also for those who live in Brighton.

# Find out more

## Association conferences in England

England is the natural home for association conferences. With world-leading universities, expert Professional Congress Organisers (PCOs), and experienced convention bureaux (CVBs), we bring together the right partners to support every stage of your event. From shaping a compelling bid to sourcing venues, accommodation and speakers, our teams ensure your conference runs seamlessly and with impact.

Our academic institutions and research communities contribute not only inspiring venues, but also the knowledge, innovation and sector expertise that make content richer and engagement deeper. Combined with England's outstanding infrastructure, hospitality and cultural offer, association conferences here deliver both professional excellence and memorable delegate experiences.

Discover how England's network of CVBs, universities and PCOs can help bring your next association conference to life: [Association Conferences in England](#).

## England's sector strengths

England offers more than just a place to gather – it provides an ecosystem where ideas thrive. Our intellectual capital, combined with a unique blend of history, tradition and innovation, state-of-the-art facilities, world-class service, and an unrivalled network of academic and industry leaders, makes England a powerful destination for business events.

Home to some of the world's most prestigious universities, England leads globally in healthcare and life sciences, advanced manufacturing, automotive, aerospace, digital technology, clean energy and sustainability, sport, and the creative industries.

Find out more about how England's sector strengths – and our forward-thinking expertise – can add purpose and impact to your next event: [England's sector strengths](#).

## Positive impact and sustainability

MeetEngland is committed to championing regenerative travel – ensuring that tourism and events generate lasting benefits for visitors, host communities, the environment, and England's visitor economy. By working hand-in-hand with destinations, venues, and suppliers, we aim to create business events that give back more than they take.

Across the country, destinations are leading the way in embedding sustainability, inclusivity, and social value into their business events strategies. From carbon reduction and waste management to responsible sourcing and community engagement, England's approach goes beyond minimising impact – it's about generating positive outcomes for people and places.

We encourage event planners to integrate sustainability and impact-led practices at every stage of planning and delivery – from venue selection and delegate travel to food sourcing, production, and post-event legacy. Together, we can make every conference, meeting and incentive a catalyst for meaningful, measurable change.

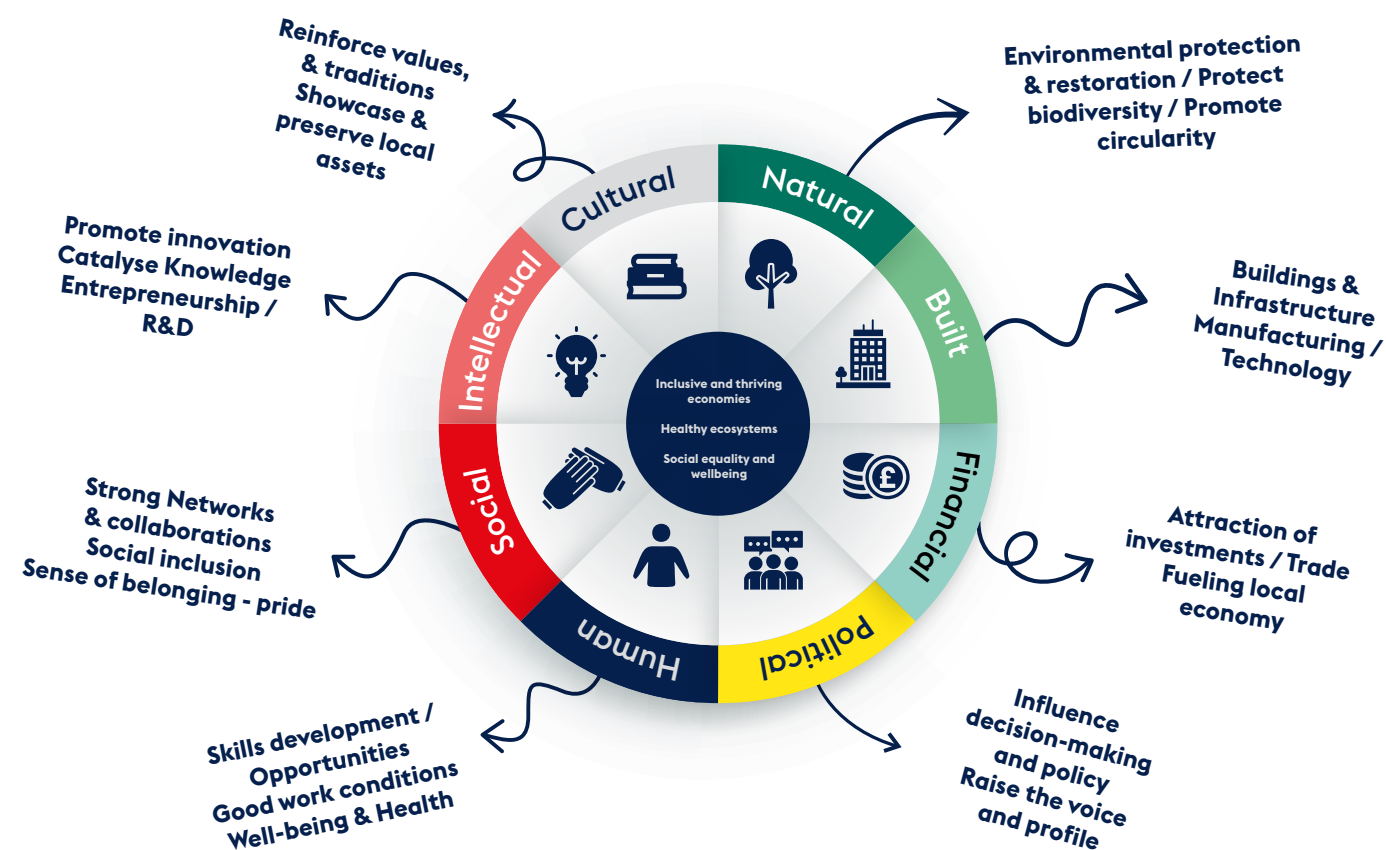
To support this, MeetEngland and VisitBritain offer a growing range of free tools and resources designed to make sustainability accessible and actionable for event planners:

- **SDGs Toolkit: Pathway to Progress**  
A resource developed to help the business events sector align with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)**. It's designed to inspire reflection and action across destinations, venues, and suppliers – encouraging the industry to identify where their work contributes most and what steps can be taken next.
- **VisitBritain BE-Impactful Framework®**  
Created in partnership with **#MEET4IMPACT**, this framework helps CVBs, venues and planners define event objectives and impact strategies across eight forms of capital – Natural, Built, Social, Human, Intellectual, Cultural, Financial and Political – all aligned with the UN SDGs.
- **Sustainability Hub for Events (SHE)**  
An AI-powered, free-to-use platform developed by **Gevme** in partnership with **Net Zero Carbon Events** and the **Strategic Alliance of National Convention Bureaux of Europe**. SHE offers event professionals the tools and insights needed to manage carbon footprints, benchmark performance, and build strategies for long-term event legacy and positive impact.

# Positive outcomes of events

Together, these initiatives form part of MeetEngland's long-term vision for a more responsible, resilient, and regenerative business events landscape.

Explore these resources and discover how you can deliver purposeful, sustainable events that leave a lasting legacy: [Sustainable and impactful business events in England](#).



More information about the **MeetEngland Impact Network** can be found on our website at [MeetEngland.com](#).

England stands at the crossroads of knowledge, innovation and opportunity. Through collaboration between destinations, government, industry and academia, we continue to deliver business events that shape global conversations and drive meaningful change.

Together, we are creating a thriving, sustainable future for business events — one that showcases England's expertise, inspires international partnerships, and leaves a lasting legacy for generations to come.

## Contact us

**MeetEngland**

Website: [MeetEngland.com](#)

LinkedIn: [MeetEngland](#)