

Press release 16 July 2008

BACD Members Vote for Merger with Eventia

At the Annual General Meeting of the British Association of Conference Destinations (BACD) held today at Aston Business School, Birmingham, members voted unanimously in favour of a proposal for BACD to merge with the trade body, Eventia.

The vote at the BACD AGM was the culmination of a lengthy series of consultations and discussions held between the respective Boards and members of the two Associations. Hamish Reid, Chair of BACD, spearheaded the discussions on behalf of BACD. He commented:

"The Board of BACD are delighted that the members of the Association have made the decision to merge with Eventia. The official merger takes place on January 1st 2009 but, in the meantime, we will be working closely with the Board of Eventia to build an association that represents a significant proportion of the multi-billion pound UK events industry. The motion was carried unanimously and I believe this demonstrates the high level of support across the British Isles for such a trade body."

Combining the resources of these two major industry bodies will mean greater benefits for both sets of members. Eventia and BACD already offer a range of training and support options through a variety of educational and networking events – benefits that will be greatly enhanced when offered through a single major industry group. Each Association also has strong ties to Government. Speaking with a united voice will only strengthen the impact of messages put forward, raising the profile and the status of the industry as a whole.

Following the merger the BACD brand will disappear but collaborative marketing opportunities will continue to be offered to the community of British conference and event destinations.

Commenting on the merger Patrick Collins, Eventia Chair and former Chairman of Universal CIT said:

"This is fantastic news for the industry. We shall be giving BACD members a very warm welcome into Eventia and working hard to develop the synergies between the respective memberships. With a higher proportion of UK-managed events remaining in the UK, a joining of the two groups will mean that British destinations in particular can be promoted even more positively to the wider business community."

Eventia grew from the merger of the ITMA and the CEA in January 2006 and its creation reflected the broadening of industry activities and responsibilities which now include multi-faceted meetings and conferences, live events, production and reward

programmes as well as the more traditional corporate hospitality events, consumer events and B2B activities. Eventia supports its wide membership and offers a variety of networking opportunities, education options, social events, good practice guidance and benchmarks.

Eventia's membership comprises UK and international event management companies, suppliers to the events industry, national tourism organisations, affiliate and freelance members. Currently totalling over 270 members, this will increase by 50 with the addition of the BACD membership.

Ends

Notes to editors:

About BACD

The British Association of Conference Destinations (BACD) is the trade association representing conference destination marketing organisations throughout the British Isles. Members are convention and visitor bureaux, conference desks, and national tourist boards. Founded in 1969, BACD is the oldest of the conference sector associations in the UK. BACD's mission is to: support, promote and represent British conference destinations. It fulfils this mission by providing: advice, research, education, networking, accreditation, business leads and joint marketing opportunities, and through maximising the opportunities for alliances and collaboration with key strategic partners.

Visit our website: www.bacd.biz

About Eventia

Eventia is the trade body representing organisations that provide business solutions through the use of events. It's the hub for conference and incentive travel organisers, live communications agencies, producers of experiential marketing activity, performance improvement programmes and corporate hospitality – as well as suppliers of services to these event management companies.

Visit our website: www.eventia.org.uk

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