



## INDUSTRY VIEWS

Continuous professional development



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# African Century

In many ways, Africa is the continent of the future. The United Nations projects that by 2050, Africa's population will nearly double to approximately 2.5 billion, accounting for over 25% of the global population.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement is set to unify 55 economies into one of the world's largest free trade zones. This monumental step will necessitate an extensive network of conference and exhibition spaces to facilitate trade and cooperation. AIPC, in partnership with its African Community, is launching customised educational programmes to bolster venues on this transformative journey.

### AFRICA IS A VIBRANT CONTINENT WITH A YOUNG AND AMBITIOUS POPULATION

Insights from The Economist, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) echo a unified optimism about Africa's future. The OECD notes an uptick in productivity across the continent. Despite rapid population growth, income per capita has increased at a rate twice that of OECD nations, heralding the rise of a robust middle class. Consumer markets are thriving, with significant increases in the ownership of everything from mobile phones to cars. However, the continent still faces challenges, such as high intra-continental trade tariffs, as highlighted by Al Jazeera research, making it more costly to import goods within Africa than from outside.

### THE INTERTWINED FUTURES OF GDP AND THE EVENT INDUSTRY

Research by AIPC demonstrates a direct correlation between GDP growth and increased revenues in the events industry. Yet, African venues are currently challenged by a shortage of skilled professionals. Offering specialised, high-quality training is crucial for overcoming these hurdles. The success of the AIPC Academy, with its comprehensive venue management curriculum, underscores the importance of such education. Nonetheless, adjustments are needed to serve the African Community better, considering factors like the high cost of travel to Europe and the need for a curriculum that addresses the specific needs of African venue professionals.

In response, under the leadership of Taubie Motlhabane, CEO of Cape Town ICC and AIPC Board Member, the Africa Academy has been launched. Available to both AIPC members and non-members, this five-day event in Cape Town (19 - 23 August) will feature dynamic sessions led by global experts on a variety of topics, from technology to security. Despite the diversity of Africa's venue landscape, the programme promises ample opportunities for sharing best practices, networking, and learning, with the ultimate goal of fostering a vibrant community of venue professionals across Africa and beyond. 4

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