

## AIPC Academy 2026 Draft Program: April 12-17



### Optional Pre-Academy Workshop: Strategic Communication (10-12 April 2026)

**Managing conflict by mastering the art of active listening and inquiry to influence positive outcome**

**Facilitators: Stuart Cole & Jason Oglesby**

Critical incidents rarely occur at a time. A workplace conflict escalates, a sensitive internal allegation lands on a leader's desk, and suddenly cyber breach adds pressure, uncertainty, and reputational risk. In those moments, organizations don't just need policy, they need calm, strategic leadership grounded in facts, clear communication, and defensible decision-making.

This workshop equips leaders and frontline professionals to perform with confidence when the stakes are high and events are unfolding rapidly. You will learn how to stabilize conflict before it escalates, using active listening and the art of inquiry to surface critical information and drive positive outcomes. We will also examine how to communicate and lead through a cyber breach with clarity, coordination, and strategic control, and how to make fair, lawful, and defensible decisions in sensitive internal investigations, especially when the evidence leads somewhere unexpected.

<b>Friday 10 April 2026</b>	
18.00 - 20.00	<b>Registration and Intro Reception for the workshop Lobby</b>

<b>Saturday 11 April 2026</b>	
09.00 - 10.30	<b>Optional Pre-Academy Workshop: Strategic Communication</b>
10.30 - 11.00	<b>Networking break</b>
11.00 - 12.00	<b>Optional Pre-Academy Workshop: Strategic Communication</b>
12.00 - 13.00	<b>Lunch break. Argan Restaurant</b>
13.00 - 14.30	<b>Optional Pre-Academy Workshop: Strategic Communication</b>
14.30 - 15.00	<b>Networking break</b>
15.00 - 16.30	<b>Optional Pre-Academy Workshop: Strategic Communication</b>
16.30 - 18.00	<b>Networking / Downtime</b>
18.00 - 19.30	<b>Buffet dinner - Argan Restaurant</b>
19.30 - 21.00	<b>Networking / Downtime</b>

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Sunday 12 April 2026	
09.00 - 10.30	<b>Optional Pre-Academy Workshop: Strategic Communication</b>
10.30 - 11.00	<b>Networking break</b>
11.00 - 12.00	<b>Optional Pre-Academy Workshop: Strategic Communication</b>
12.00 - 13.00	<b>Lunch break. Argan Restaurant</b>

### AIPC ACADEMY (12-17 April 2026)

Sunday 12 April 2026	
13.30 - 14.00	<b>Registration</b>
14.00 – 14.15	<b>Welcome to the AIPC 2026 Academy!</b> <b>Presenter: Sven Bossu   CEO   AIPC</b>
14.15 – 15.00	<b>Icebreaker exercise: Circle of Connectivity and Council</b> Introduce yourself in 1 minute! Share your role, venue, and unique perspective in a dynamic, outdoor circle to foster connections and set the stage for collaboration. <b>Presenters: Participants</b> Terrasse e-coffee / Cherry Meeting Room <b>Kurby Court   President &amp; CEO   Calgary Convention Center</b>
15.00 - 15.30	<b>Unleash the Warrior Within. The Haka Experience</b> <b>Steve McKenzie   Chief Innovation Officer   Momentus Technologies</b>
15.30 - 16.00	<b>Global Market Outlook</b> A "scene setter" for Academy discussions, this opening session will provide a global market outlook, based on recent research by AIPC partners. <b>Presenter: Sven Bossu   CEO   AIPC</b>
16.00 - 17.00	<b>Technology. to boldly go ...</b> Technology has never been as important for convention centres as it is today, whether it concerns the implementation of health & safety protocols, enabling digital events or delivering actionable insights via data mining. This session will give an overview of the market landscape and the latest trends when it comes to technology for convention centers.

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	<p><b>Presenter.</b></p> <p><b>Steve MacKenzie</b>   Chief Innovation Officer   Momentus Technologies</p>
17.00 – 17.30	<p><b>Introduction of team challenges</b></p> <p>A key element of the AIPC Academy are the team challenges. joint exercises round industry challenges. In this session, the participants will be briefed on their mission.</p> <p><b>Presenters:</b></p> <p><b>Sven Bossu</b>   CEO   AIPC</p> <p><b>Julianne Jammers</b>   Managing Director   STCC</p>
17.30 – 18.30	<p><b>Group Project - Individual Team Kick off</b></p>
18.30 - 19.00	<p><b>Welcome reception</b></p> <p>Badian Lounge Bar</p>
19.00 - 19.30	<p><b>Group Project Team Dinner</b></p> <p>Buffet Dinner. Argan Restaurant</p>
19.30 – 21:00	<p><b>Group Project Time</b></p>
<p><b>Monday 13 April 2026</b></p>	
08.15 - 09.00	<p><b>Start of day Exercise: Behaviour Shapes</b></p> <p><b>Kurby Court</b>   President &amp; CEO   Calgary Convention Center</p> <p>This session explores Behaviour Shapes to help teams understand different working styles. Through a short pre-work exercise and group discussion, participants identify personality tendencies, recognise strengths and challenges, and learn practical tips to collaborate more effectively, reduce friction, and improve teamwork and communication</p>
09.00 - 09.45	<p><b>5 Generations – what we need and how we work with intention</b></p> <p><b>Presenter: TBC</b></p>
09.45 - 10.30	<p><b>Global Trends in Events</b></p> <p><b>Professor Gayle McPherson, BA (Hons), PhD, FHEA, FRSA</b>   Chair in Events and Cultural Policy, and Director of the Research Centre for Culture, Sport and Events   School of Business and Creative Industries, University of West of Scotland</p> <p>Professor Gayle McPherson explores key trends in the evolving event industry, highlighting global growth, sustainability, and stakeholder expectations. She'll discuss emerging markets, women's football, multi-city bids, and AI's impact on venues and branding, emphasizing the industry's role in achieving net zero and adapting to technological advancements.</p>

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10.30 - 11.00	<b>Networking break</b>
11.00 - 12.00	<p><b>Voice of the Customer</b></p> <p>The overall event industry – similar to other industries – is facing an increased level of uncertainty. In this session, you will hear from 2 very different event organizers the challenges they are facing and how this is impacting their expectations with regards to contracting convention centers.</p> <p><b>Presenters:</b></p> <p><b>Natasha Richards</b>   Director of Impact &amp; Industry Relations   IMEX</p> <p><b>Chiara Gasparotto</b>   Deputy CEO   European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO)</p>
12.00 - 13.00	<p><b>Lunch &amp; Group project</b></p> <p><b>Argan Restaurant</b></p>
13.00 - 14.30	<p><b>Human Factors Part 1 - Crisis Communications</b></p> <p>Art of Inquiry and Active Listening</p> <p>Greyscale Intelligence Facilitation</p>
14.30 - 15.00	<b>Networking break</b>
15.00 - 16.30	<p><b>Human Factors Part 2 - Crisis Communications</b></p> <p>Breach Case Study</p> <p>Greyscale Intelligence Facilitation</p>
16.30 – 18.30	<b>Group Project Time</b>
18.30 - 20.00	<b>Cocktail and Tapas Academy. Learn, Taste, Enjoy</b>
20.00 – 22.00	<b>Group Project Time</b>

### Tuesday 14 April 2026

08.15 - 09.00	<p><b>Start of day Exercise: Systems</b></p> <p><b>Presenter: Kurby Court</b>   President &amp; CEO   Calgary Convention Center</p>
09.00 - 10.30	<p><b>Leadership through uncertainty Part 1</b></p> <p><b>Presenter: Sandy Kennedy</b>   CEO   Entrepreneurial Scotland</p> <p>Uncertainty is the norm, but it also drives growth. This interactive workshop, led by executive Sandy Kennedy, equips leaders with tools to navigate ambiguity, mitigate risks, and turn uncertainty into opportunity. Through discussions and exercises, gain insights to lead confidently, make informed decisions, and inspire your team.</p>

10.30 - 11.00	<b>Networking break</b>
11.00 - 12.00	<b>Leadership through uncertainty Part 2</b> <b>Presenter: Sandy Kennedy</b>   CEO   Entrepreneurial Scotland
12.00 - 12.45	<b>Lunch break</b> <b>Argan Restaurant</b>
12.45 - 13.15	<b>Departure - Walk to Castle</b>
13.15 – 15.30	<p><b>Management by Walking Around with a Royal Touch</b></p> <p>In this session, the participants will be broken up into small teams. Each team will receive a case study on a convention center which needs to be “fixed”. Applying the lessons learned so far, each team will come up with a proposal, addressing the challenges faced. Next to the case study, the teams will have access to a chief operating officer, a chief technology officer, a sales manager and a HR- manager to obtain additional information and guidance. However, the teams will only have 2,5 hours to come up with the solution.</p> <p><b>Facilitated by:</b></p> <p><b>Julianne Jammers</b> Managing Director   SwissTech Convention Center – EPF  <b>Steve McKenzie</b>   Chief Innovation Officer   Momentus Technologies  <b>Kurby Court</b>   <b>President &amp; CEO</b>   <b>Calgary Convention Center</b>  <b>Gemma Roxburgh</b>   Chief Financial Officer   Hacking and Paterson Management Services</p>
15.30 – 16.00	<b>Travel back from Castle</b>
16.00 - 18.00	<b>Group Project time</b>
18.00 – 20.30	<b>Dinner - Group Project Presentations</b>
20.30 – 22.00	<b>Networking/ Downtime</b>
<b>Wednesday 15 April 2026</b>	
08.15 - 09.00	<b>Start of day Exercise - Toast</b> <b>Presenter: Kurby Court</b>   President & CEO   Calgary Convention Center
09.00 - 10.30	<p><b>Everything you want to ask a CEO</b></p> <p><b>Presenters:</b></p> <p><b>Julianne Jammers</b>   Executive Director   SwissTech Center  <b>Kurby Court</b>   President &amp; CEO   Calgary Convention Center  <b>Lenka Zlebkova</b>   CEO   Prague Convention Center</p>

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10.30 - 11.00	<b>Networking break</b>
11.00 - 12.00	<p><b>Business Development – What we think, we become</b></p> <p>Business development entails tasks and processes to develop and implement growth opportunities within and between organizations. But it all starts with an ambition and articulated objectives, which is turned into reality. In this session, you will hear from a senior industry leader how this can be achieved.</p> <p><b>Presenter: Genevieve Lim</b>   Assistant Vice President of Sales &amp; MICE   Marina Bay Sands</p>
12.00 - 13.00	<b>Lunch break.</b>
13.00 - 14.30	<p><b>Trends – AV has moved from Backstage to centre stage – Case Study</b></p> <p>Presentation and Exercise</p> <p><b>Presenter: Zsuzsa Szégner</b>   Head of Sales   Visual Europe Group (BUD)</p>
14.30 - 14.45	<b>Networking break</b>
14:45 – 16:45	<p><b>Team Building – Beat the box</b></p> <p>Crack the code before time runs out! Teams solve puzzles, unlock chests, and collaborate to reveal a hidden slogan. A thrilling adventure that fosters teamwork, problem-solving, and communication</p>
16.45 – 18.00	<b>Networking / Down Time</b>
18.00 – 20.00	<b>Dinner - Group Project Presentations</b>
20.00 – 22.00	<b>Networking / Down Time</b>

### Thursday 16 April 2026

08.15 - 09.00	<p><b>Start of day Exercise: Council Confidential</b></p> <p><b>Kurby Court</b>   President &amp; CEO   Calgary Convention Center</p>
09.00 - 10.30	<p><b>Working Through Difference: Mediation Approaches for Everyday Team Challenges</b></p> <p>Complex, uncertain, or uncomfortable moments are part of teamwork—but they don't have to derail collaboration. In this session, we expand our choices for responding to differences, tension, and uncertainty in everyday work—using tools like a resolution path and introducing workplace mediation as structured support to move conversations forward. Angela Herberholz is an international facilitator and mediator with over 15 years of experience supporting organisations in strengthening collaboration and addressing interpersonal challenges constructively.</p>

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	<b>Presenter. Angela Herberholz</b>   Founder   HERBERHOLZ MEDIATION SERVICES
10.30 - 11.00	<b>Networking break</b>
11.00 – 12.30	<p><b>Finance. bringing it all together</b></p> <p>Finance is where everything connects. In this session, Gemma will share how financial data goes far beyond numbers on a spreadsheet and becomes a powerful tool to understand the overall health, performance and resilience of a convention centre.</p> <p>Drawing on her experience in senior finance roles across multiple industries – including the events sector – Gemma will explore how meaningful financial insight supports strategic decision-making, operational efficiency and long-term sustainability. A practical session for leaders who want finance to truly add value to the business..</p> <p><b>Gemma Roxburgh</b>   Chief Financial Officer   Hacking and Paterson Management Services</p>
12.30 – 13.30	<b>Lunch break. Argan Restaurant</b>
13.30 – 15.00	<p><b>Sustainability in Action – Behind the scenes Case study</b></p> <p><b>Presentation and Q&amp;A</b></p> <p><b>Presenter: Rob Turnbull</b>   Sustainability Manager   Edinburgh International Conference Centre</p> <p>The Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC) has been leading the way in sustainable events for the past 30 years. Rob Turnbull, the EICC’s Sustainability Manager, will share the Centre’s journey, highlighting how it has reduced its carbon emissions by 60% over the past decade, even while hosting twice as many events. From smart energy management and low-carbon travel planning to responsible catering, community food redistribution, and inclusive initiatives, discover how the EICC creates events that are greener, more inclusive and impactful, raising the standard for sustainable gatherings.</p>
15.00 - 15.30	<b>Networking break</b>
15.30 - 16.30	<p><b>HR &amp; Leadership Individual Challenges - Group Solutions</b></p> <p>Access to entire Co-hort and leaders Group Exercise</p> <p><b>Kurby Court</b>   President &amp; CEO   Calgary Convention Center</p>
16.30 – 17.30	<b>Networking / Down Time</b>
17.30 – 18.30	<b>Cocktails</b>
18.30 – 20.00	<b>Special Academy Dinner - Brasserie 135</b>
20.00 – 22.00	<b>Networking / Down Time</b>

Friday 17 April 2026	
09.00 – 09.30	<p><b>Start of day Exercise</b> Mind &amp; Memories Review of Week! <b>Presenter: Kurby Court</b>   President &amp; CEO   Calgary Convention Center</p>
09.30 – 10.30	<p><b>Hosting a NATO Summit. Insights from The Hague's 2025 Experience</b> <b>Presenter.</b> <b>Michiel Middendorf</b>   General Manager  World Forum The Hague <b>Robert Dingjan</b>   Head of Conference Bureau   Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands</p> <p>In 2025, The Hague hosted a historic <b>NATO Summit</b>, bringing together global leaders, heads of state and international delegations under the highest security, protocol and operational standards.</p> <p>In this joint session, <b>Michiel Middendorf</b> and <b>Robert Dingjan</b> will offer a behind-the-scenes look at what it truly takes to deliver an event of this scale and sensitivity. Drawing on the close collaboration between the convention centre and national authorities, they will share key insights on strategic planning, inter-agency coordination, security logistics, stakeholder management and the role of convention centres in supporting major geopolitical events.</p> <p>A rare opportunity to explore how venues and public institutions can successfully work together to host world-class, high-stakes summits.</p>
10.30 - 10.45	<p><b>Networking break</b></p>
10.45 - 11.30	<p><b>Design is how it works, not how it looks like</b> Good event design is key for delivering successful events and goes beyond the creative elements. it should include a clear strategy, excellent production and analytics allowing for actionable insights. This session will focus on the role convention centers can play when it comes to event design, covering all these elements.</p> <p><b>Presenter. Adam Paulitsch</b>   Design Director and Principal   Populous Kansas City</p>
11.30 - 12.30	<p><b>Wrap Up / Survey / Awards / Toast / Departures</b></p>