

AIPC Academy 2026 Draft Program: April 12-17



AIPC ACADEMY (12-17 April 2026)

Sunday 12 April 2026	
13.30 - 14.00	Registration
14.00 – 14.15	Welcome to the AIPC 2026 Academy! Presenter: Sven Bossu CEO AIPC
14.15 – 15.00	Icebreaker exercise: Circle of Connectivity and Council 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. Presenters: Participants Terrasse e-coffee / Cherry Meeting Room Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center
15.00 - 15.30	Unleash the Warrior Within. The Haka Experience Steve McKenzie Chief Innovation Officer Momentus Technologies
15.30 - 16.00	Global Market Outlook A "scene setter" for Academy discussions, this opening session will provide a global market outlook, based on recent research by AIPC partners. Presenter: Sven Bossu CEO AIPC
16.00 - 17.00	Technology. to boldly go ... 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. Presenter. Steve MacKenzie Chief Innovation Officer Momentus Technologies
17.00 – 17.30	Introduction of team challenges 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. Presenters: Sven Bossu CEO AIPC Julianne Jammers Managing Director STCC

17.30 – 18.30	Time to freshen up
18.30 - 19.00	Welcome reception Badian Lounge Bar
19.00 - 19.30	Group Project Team Dinner Buffet Dinner. Argan Restaurant
19.30 – 21:00	Networking time
Monday 13 April 2026	
08.15 - 09.00	Start of day Exercise: Behaviour Shapes Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center 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
09.00 - 09.45	Presentations – Is it art or is it science? Emily Fleck Graphic Designer Calgary Convention Center Leaders are often called upon to deliver presentations on a wide range of topics. This informative session will explore the science behind the art of crafting presentations that deliver impactful and compelling storytelling.
09.45 - 10.30	Global Trends in Events Dr Jenny Flinn DMan, MPhil, BA (Hons) SFHEA Lecturer in Event Marketing University of the West of Scotland This session will explore key trends shaping the evolving global event industry, including international growth, sustainability imperatives, and rising stakeholder expectations. The discussion will cover emerging markets, the growing influence of women’s football, multi-city bidding strategies, and the increasing role of AI in venues, operations, and destination branding. Particular emphasis will be placed on the industry’s responsibility in progressing toward net zero targets and adapting to rapid technological change.
10.30 - 11.00	Networking break
11.00 - 12.00	Voice of the Customer 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

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	<p>organizers the challenges they are facing and how this is impacting their expectations with regards to contracting convention centers.</p> <p>Presenters: Natasha Richards Director of Impact & Industry Relations IMEX Chiara Gasparotto Deputy CEO European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO)</p>
12.00 - 13.00	<p>Lunch & Group project Argan Restaurant</p>
13.00 - 14.30	<p>Communication – When stakes are high and human factors are at play. In this interactive session, an experienced team of professional negotiators will delve into both the science and the art of effective communication when the stakes are high. The insights shared are designed for leaders with practical application in everyday life. Stu Cole & Jason Oglesby Greyscale Intelligence Facilitation</p>
14.30 - 15.00	<p>Networking break</p>
15.00 - 16.30	<p>Human Factors in Crisis – Case Study So you’re experiencing a cyberattack - what’s about to happen to you, your team, and your organization? Two internationally recognized breach coaches will guide you through an interactive session built around a real case study, allowing leaders to experience what unfolds during a response to a breach from both the victim and the dark side of the breach. Along the way, leaders will be exposed to the critical human factors that influence an individual, the team, and the organization throughout the incident. Stu Cole & Jason Oglesby Greyscale Intelligence Facilitation</p>
16.30 – 18.30	<p>Group Project Time</p>
18.30 - 20.00	<p>Cocktail and Tapas Academy. Learn, Taste, Enjoy</p>
20.00 – 22.00	<p>Networking time</p>

Tuesday 14 April 2026

08.15 - 09.00	<p>Start of day Exercise: Systems Presenter: Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center</p>
09.00 - 10.30	<p>Leadership through uncertainty Part 1 Presenter: Sandy Kennedy CEO Entrepreneurial Scotland Uncertainty is the norm, but it also drives growth. This interactive workshop, led by executive Sandy Kennedy, equips leaders with tools to navigate ambiguity,</p>

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	mitigate risks, and turn uncertainty into opportunity. Through discussions and exercises, gain insights to lead confidently, make informed decisions, and inspire your team.
10.30 - 11.00	Networking break
11.00 - 12.00	Leadership through uncertainty Part 2 Presenter: Sandy Kennedy CEO Entrepreneurial Scotland
12.00 - 13.00	Lunch break Argan Restaurant
13.00 – 15.30	Management by Walking Around 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. Facilitated by: Julianne Jammers Managing Director SwissTech Convention Center – EPF Steve McKenzie Chief Innovation Officer Momentus Technologies Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center Gemma Roxburgh Chief Financial Officer Hacking and Paterson Management Services
15.30 – 16.00	Short Break and Debrief
16.00 - 18.00	Group Project time
18.00 – 20.30	Dinner - Group Project Presentations
20.30 – 22.00	Networking/ Downtime
Wednesday 15 April 2026	
08.15 - 09.00	Start of day Exercise - Toast Presenter: Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center
09.00 - 10.30	Everything you want to ask a CEO Presenters: Julianne Jammers Executive Director SwissTech Center Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center

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	Lenka Zlebkova CEO Prague Convention Center
10.30 - 11.00	Networking break
11.00 - 12.00	<p>Business Development – What we think, we become</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>Presenter: Genevieve Lim Assistant Vice President of Sales & MICE Marina Bay Sands</p>
12.00 - 13.00	Lunch break.
13.00 - 14.30	<p>Trends – AV has moved from Backstage to centre stage – Case Study</p> <p>Presentation and Exercise</p> <p>Presenter: Zsuzsa Szégnér Head of Sales Visual Europe Group (BUD)</p>
14.30 - 14.45	Networking break
14:45 – 15:45	<p>Design Thinking</p> <p>Sven Bossu CEO AIPC</p>
15:45 – 16:45	Finalise the presentations
16.45 – 18.00	Networking / Down Time
18.00 – 20.00	Dinner - Group Project Presentations
20.00 – 22.00	Networking / Down Time

Thursday 16 April 2026

08.15 - 09.00	<p>Start of day Exercise: Council Confidential</p> <p>Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center</p>
09.00 - 10.30	<p>Working Through Difference: Mediation Approaches for Everyday Team Challenges</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</p>

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	<p>organisations in strengthening collaboration and addressing interpersonal challenges constructively.</p> <p>Presenter. Angela Herberholz Founder HERBERHOLZ MEDIATION SERVICES</p>
10.30 - 11.00	Networking break
11.00 – 12.30	<p>Finance. bringing it all together</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>Gemma Roxburgh Chief Financial Officer Hacking and Paterson Management Services</p>
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch break. Argan Restaurant
13.30 – 15.00	<p>Sustainability in Action</p> <p>Presentation and Q&A</p> <p>TBC</p>
15.00 - 15.30	Networking break
15.30 - 16.30	<p>HR & Leadership Individual Challenges - Group Solutions</p> <p>Access to entire Co-hort and leaders Group Exercise</p> <p>Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center</p>
16.30 – 17.30	Networking / Down Time
17.30 – 18.30	Cocktails
18.30 – 20.00	Special Academy Dinner - Brasserie 135
20.00 – 22.00	Networking / Down Time

Friday 17 April 2026

09.00 – 09.30	<p>Start of day Exercise</p> <p>Mind & Memories Review of Week!</p>
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	<p>Presenter: Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center</p>
09.30 – 10.30	<p>Hosting a NATO Summit. Insights from The Hague's 2025 Experience Presenter.</p> <p>Michiel Middendorf General Manager World Forum The Hague Robert Dingjan Head of Conference Bureau Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands</p> <p>In 2025, The Hague hosted a historic NATO Summit, bringing together global leaders, heads of state and international delegations under the highest security, protocol and operational standards.</p> <p>In this joint session, Michiel Middendorf and Robert Dingjan 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>Networking break</p>
10.45 - 11.30	<p>Design is how it works, not how it looks like</p> <p>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 centres can play when it comes to event design, covering all these elements.</p> <p>Presenter. Adam Paulitsch Design Director and Principal Populous Kansas City</p>
11.30 - 12.30	<p>Wrap Up / Survey / Awards / Toast / Departures</p>