

AIPC ACADEMY (12-17 April 2026)

Sunday 12 April 2026	
13.30 - 14.00	Registration
14.00 - 14.15	<p>Welcome to the AIPC 2026 Academy!</p> <p>Presenter: Sven Bossu CEO AIPC</p>
14.15 - 15.00	<p>Icebreaker exercise: Circle of Connectivity and Council</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Presenters: Participants</p> <p>Terrasse e-coffee / Cherry Meeting Room</p> <p>Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center</p>
15.00 - 15.30	<p>The Power of the Haka: Building Identity, Unity, and High-Performing Teams</p> <p>In this interactive session, we explore the cultural significance of the haka - its deep roots in Māori tradition and its powerful role in shaping the mindset and unity of New Zealand’s All Blacks rugby team. Participants will gain insight into how shared purpose, collective energy, and intentional rituals can transform a group of individuals into a cohesive, high-performing team. Through discussion and a short experiential exercise, attendees will discover how to create alignment, strengthen team identity, and show up with greater intention in their own environments. This session offers a unique blend of cultural understanding and practical application - leaving participants with simple, powerful tools to elevate how their teams connect and perform.</p> <p>Presenter: Steve MacKenzie Chief Innovation Officer Momentus Technologies</p>
15.30 - 16.00	Global Market Outlook

	<p>A "scene setter" for Academy discussions, this opening session will provide a global market outlook, based on recent research by AIPC partners.</p> <p>Presenter: Sven Bossu CEO AIPC</p>
16.00 - 17.00	<p>Venue Technology: A shift is happening now</p> <p>Venue technology is shifting fast - from passive infrastructure to intelligent, experience-driving ecosystems. This session explores what the "smart venue" revolution means in real terms, and where it's headed next. Then we'll get hands-on, building an AI agent from scratch to show a clear, practical path for applying AI in your venue right now.</p> <p>Presenter: Steve MacKenzie Chief Innovation Officer Momentus Technologies</p>
17.00 - 17.30	<p>Introduction of team challenges</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>Presenters:</p> <p>Sven Bossu CEO AIPC</p> <p>Julianne Jammers Managing Director STCC</p>
17.30 - 18.30	<p>Time to freshen up</p>
18.30 - 19.00	<p>Welcome reception</p> <p>Badian Lounge Bar</p>
19.00 - 19.30	<p>Group Project Team Dinner</p> <p>Buffet Dinner. Argan Restaurant</p>
19.30 - 21:00	<p>Networking time</p>
<p>Monday 13 April 2026</p>	
08.15 - 09.00	<p>Start of day Exercise: Behaviour Shapes</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</p>

	<p>personality tendencies, recognise strengths and challenges, and learn practical tips to collaborate more effectively, reduce friction, and improve teamwork and communication</p> <p>Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center</p>
09.00 - 09.45	<p>Presentations – Is it art or is it science?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Presenter: Emily Fleck Graphic Designer Calgary Convention Center</p>
09.45 - 10.30	<p>Global Trends in Events</p> <p>In a rapidly evolving global landscape, event professionals are under increasing pressure to deliver experiences that are not only memorable, but meaningful.</p> <p>This session explores key global trends shaping the events industry, with a focus on how we create value through events and experiences. It will examine the importance of connecting with communities and understanding the wider social impact of events, alongside the ongoing professionalisation of the industry and the need to develop a skilled, adaptable workforce.</p> <p>The session will also explore how technology is continuing to transform the way we design, deliver and engage with event experiences, creating new opportunities for connection, personalisation and impact.</p> <p>Ultimately, the session will challenge attendees to rethink not just what events do, but what they mean, and how we can design experiences that create lasting value for people, organisations and communities.</p> <p>Presenters: Dr Jenny Flinn DMan, MPhil, BA (Hons) SFHEA Lecturer in Event Marketing University of the West of Scotland</p>
10.30 - 11.00	<p>Networking break</p>
11.00 - 12.00	<p>Voice of the Customer</p>

	<p>As uncertainty reshapes the global events landscape, expectations from organisers are evolving fast. In this session, you will hear from two leading event organisers, Natasha Richards and Chiara Gasparotto, who will share first-hand insights into the challenges they face and how these are influencing their approach to working with convention centres.</p> <p>Through an open and dynamic discussion, we will explore shifting delegate expectations, the future role of venues, the balance between sustainability and cost, and what tomorrow’s events may look like.</p> <p>An honest, forward-looking conversation designed to give future leaders a clear view of what truly matters to clients today.</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <p>Natasha Richards Director of Impact & Industry Relations IMEX</p> <p>Chiara Gasparotto CEO The European Resuscitation Council (ERC)</p>
<p>12.00 - 13.00</p>	<p>Lunch & Group project Argan Restaurant</p>
<p>13.00 - 14.30</p>	<p>Communication – When stakes are high and human factors are at play.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Presenter: Stu Cole & Jason Oglesby Greyscale Intelligence Facilitation</p>
<p>14.30 - 15.00</p>	<p>Networking break</p>
<p>15.00 - 16.30</p>	<p>Human Factors in Crisis – Case Study</p> <p>So you’re experiencing a cyberattack - what’s about to happen to you, your team, and your organization? Two experienced threat actor communication specialists will guide</p>

	<p>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.</p> <p>Presenter: Stu Cole & Jason Oglesby Greyscale Intelligence Facilitation</p>
16.30 – 18.30	Group Project Time
18.30 - 20.00	Cocktail and Tapas Academy. Learn, Taste, Enjoy
20.00 – 22.00	Networking time

Tuesday 14 April 2026	
08.15 - 09.00	<p>Start of day Exercise: Systems</p> <p>Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center</p>
09.00 - 10.30	<p>Leadership through uncertainty Part 1</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> <p>Presenter: Sandy Kennedy CEO Entrepreneurial Scotland</p>
10.30 - 11.00	Networking break
11.00 - 12.00	<p>Leadership through uncertainty Part 2</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> <p>Presenter: Sandy Kennedy CEO Entrepreneurial Scotland</p>

12.00 - 13.00	<p>Lunch break</p> <p>Argan Restaurant</p>
13.00 – 15.30	<p>Management by Walking Around</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>Facilitated by:</p> <p>Julianne Jammers Managing Director SwissTech Convention Center – EPF</p> <p>Steve McKenzie Chief Innovation Officer Momentus Technologies</p> <p>Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center</p> <p>Gemma Roxburgh Chief Financial Officer Hacking and Paterson Management Services</p>
15.30 – 16.00	<p>Short Break and Debrief</p>
16.00 - 18.00	<p>Group Project time</p>
18.00 – 20.30	<p>Dinner - Group Project Presentations</p>
20.30 – 22.00	<p>Networking/ Downtime</p>
<p>Wednesday 15 April 2026</p>	
08.15 - 09.00	<p>Start of day Exercise - Toast</p> <p>Presenter: Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center</p>
09.00 - 10.30	<p>Everything you want to ask a CEO</p>

	<p>Presenters: Julianne Jammers Executive Director SwissTech Center Kurby Court President & CEO Calgary Convention Center Lenka Zlebkova CEO Prague Convention Center</p>
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 Szégner 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 organisations in strengthening collaboration and addressing interpersonal challenges constructively.</p> <p>Presenter. Angela Herberholz Founder HERBERHOLZ MEDIATION SERVICES</p>
10.30 - 11.00	<p>Networking break</p>
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	<p>Lunch break. Argan Restaurant</p>
13.30 – 15.00	<p>Sustainability in Action</p>

	<p>Presentation and Q&A James Rees ExCeL London Executive Director</p>
15.00 - 15.30	Networking break
15.30 - 16.30	<p>HR & Leadership Individual Challenges - Group Solutions Access to entire Co-hort and leaders Group Exercise 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 Mind & Memories Review of Week! 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 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. 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</p>

	<p>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> <p>Presenters:</p> <p>Michiel Middendorf General Manager World Forum The Hague</p> <p>Robert Dingjan Head of Conference Bureau Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands</p>
<p>10.30 - 10.45</p>	<p>Networking break</p>
<p>10.45 - 11.30</p>	<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>
<p>11.30 - 12.30</p>	<p>Wrap Up / Survey / Awards / Toast / Departures</p>