



Head Office - Melbourne
Collins Square
Tower Two
Level 28, 727 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3008

Tel +61 3 9002 2222
info@melbournecb.com.au
melbournecb.com.au
ABN 62 072 324 933

Letter of Reference

Dear Andrew

I am excited to endorse Sandro's AACB Staff Scholarship project proposal, not only to motivate his curious and initiative driven mind but also because of the value the suggested research project outcome promises to AACB's members.

Sandro has demonstrated on several occasions that his unique contribution to the Melbourne Convention Bureau is about his profound understanding of the MICE industry combined with his international brand and marketing expertise.

Strategically important projects include:

- > The redevelopment of the Uncover Melbourne strategy to enhance the AIME delegate experience and strengthen MCB's brand presence at tradeshows
- > Initiating a brand refresh to optimise MCB's communication with audiences in China and via MCB's digital collateral
- > Restructuring the delivery process of partnerships marketing benefits, designed collateral and supported events
- > Launching MCB's updated corporate website to boost MCB's engagement with decision makers and public interest in MCB
- > Introduction of bids microsites and online information kits that are now key digital marketing tools for our BD team to secure business events

The opportunity would enhance Sandro's daily contribution to MCB's Marketing deliverables and improve MCB's and other Bureaux communication with relevant audiences across the globe.

Kind regards,


Julia Swanson
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Research project title

The value of experience design (XD) for business events and Australian CVBs

Project proposal

The key outcome of this research project is to bridge best practice knowledge in design management from other sectors and equip CVBs and their partners with recommendations to optimise their communication with relevant audiences. This will elevate and empower the Australian business events industry to secure more events by creating event utility, significance, novelty and nuance.

The paper will evaluate how design methods can be applied to the business events industry and how the integration of design management can make a difference in:

- > Developing customer focused marketing and communication strategies
- > Producing innovation and efficiency through a customer centric approach
- > Generating emotional connections throughout all customer touch points
- > Using most recent technology to intensify customer engagement

The research project will provide:

- > Status quo analysis and its limitations
- > Outside industry trends and the relevance to Australian CVBs
- > Recommendations about opportunities and best practice to implement design management to business events, AACB members and strategic partners

The project consists of four key parts:

- 1) Attend the dmi:Design Management Conference Europe to expand knowledge, connect with international experts in that field and explore cross disciplinary opportunities
- 2) Attend workshops and conduct interviews of domestic experience design experts to collate a broad understanding of this design method and explore what realistic avenues those specialists recommend for the MICE industry
- 3) Develop a research paper outlining the recommended benefits for AACB members and the MICE industry in general
- 4) Circulate the results through MCB digital channels, industry event presentations and industry publications crediting AACB, Tourism Australia and Qantas as sponsors of this research project

About the author

I am an economist and marketer, passionate about improving the productive collaboration between creative professionals and corporate management teams.

I have been curating event and brand experiences since the late nineties. Over those 20 years of project management practice and supporting organisations engaging with their audiences allowed me to explore multiple industries and cultures around the globe.

I have always been at the interface between creativity and commerce and apply design methods to the tourism and business events industry.

Today, I am developing integrated marketing campaigns for the Melbourne Convention Bureau and consult small to medium sized enterprises in optimising their operational performances, their customer experiences and marketing strategies. You may also meet me at mentoring programs supporting young entrepreneurs or freelancing in the creative economy.

The AACB's staff scholarship would allow me to resume a conversation from my academic publication in 2004 that discussed the role of design management in the work relationship of product designers and business professionals.

Since then I have project managed campaigns and corporate events for brand agencies and across all four areas of the MICE industry. Those experiences led me to MCB where I am now able to contribute my brand campaign expertise combined with an excellent understanding of CVBs' target audiences.

The provided scholarship grant would be a significant contribution towards my professional development, immersing myself in the area of design management relevant to my chosen career path in Tourism and Events.

Timeline and activities

Sep - Oct 2019	Research current XD trends in other industries
<i>31 October 2019</i>	<i>Milestone - Refine research paper statement and outline</i>
Nov 19 – Apr 20	Conduct interviews and collate scientific research results
Mar – Jul 2020	Develop research paper based on new developments in design management applied to business events and tourism
Oct 19 – Jun 20	Attend specialised conferences and workshops in Australia, North America or Europe to obtain further expertise and exchange knowledge and findings
<i>30 July 2020</i>	<i>Milestone – Provide final research paper</i>
August 2020	Prepare final presentation and use industry speaking opportunities to create awareness around this topic
<i>September 2020</i>	<i>Milestone - Present at the AACB Destination BE Conference</i>

Proposed Research Project by Sandro Serio
Marketing Manager at the Melbourne Convention Bureau

Estimated Budget for AACB Scholarship Research Project			15-Aug-19
Item	Description of expenses	Per unit costs	Subtotal
Transportation			
Travel to professional conferences	1x international flight (covered by Qantas sponsorship)	\$0	\$0
Travel insurances	For 1x international trip - 5 days each	\$50	\$50
Travel to interstate event or sponsor meetings	2x national trips to attend specialised course, meet for interview or meeting with AACB, TA or Qantas	\$450	\$900
Travel for consultation and consultants' travel	Contingency for local travel expenses	\$500	\$500
Mileage for researcher and research participants	Contingency for local travel expenses	\$500	\$500
Course and event registration fees			
Conference attendance	Based on 1x international specialised conference abroad	\$1,500	\$1,500
Local courses	Based on 3x specialised events in Melbourne or interstate	\$400	\$1,200
Accommodation and per diem			
International event attendance	Based on 1x international event - 4 nights	\$1,000	\$1,000
Local event attendance	Based on 2x interstate events - 2 nights	\$400	\$800
Other incidentals			
Questionnaire forms	Contingency for design, development and conduction of field study	\$800	\$800
Data and publications	Purchase of supporting and relevant research publications and data	\$500	\$500
Translation services	Contingency for translations from non English but relevant publications	\$500	\$500
Publication costs	Design, development and print of final publication and presentation	\$400	\$400
Office supplies specifically for project	Contingency for stationary, specific software licenses, etc.	\$500	\$500
Communications	Phone, video conference calls, internet	\$350	\$350
General Contingency			
	Miscellaneous expenses	\$500	\$500
	All estimated costs listed in AU\$ including GST	TOTAL	\$10,000
	Above listed items are based on current research outline and subject to change due to research project statement adjustments		

APPLICATION FORM – to be complete by the applicant

I, Sandro Serio (Applicant), Marketing Manager (Position),
at Melbourne Convention B (Bureau), hereby submit this application for the
AACB Staff Scholarship. I confirm that I have prepared this submission personally and that I
have consulted with Julia Swanson, CEO/Mgr of MCB (Org.)
in the development of the Project Proposal included within. I have read and understand the
"Conditions & Scholarship Details" and also accept that the decision of the judging panel
(once announced) will be final and that no negotiations will be entered into.

Signature

Date

NOMINATION FORM – to be complete by the CEO/Manager

I, Julia Swanson, ^{Acting} CEO/Mgr of MCB (Org.),
endorse the submission of Sandro Serio (Applicant), a ~~middle~~/
senior level staff member at our bureau, for the AACB Staff Scholarship 2019/20. I have
consulted with the applicant on their Project Proposal and I confirm that it is a relevant
initiative which would deliver identifiable benefits to our organisation and AACB member
bureaux. I also confirm that the applicant has read the "Conditions & Scholarship Details".

Signature

Date

