

2020 Destinations International Prize

Applicant: Lucinda Hunter, Event Services Coordinator at Brisbane Marketing

What excites you about working for a bureau and how are you making a difference?

Born and raised in Brisbane, I am passionate about my city. Working at a bureau gives me the opportunity to share my knowledge and enthusiasm with international and national event organisers who are in search of a dynamic business events destination. I am learning from industry leaders about what drives business events to my city and collaborating with an experienced and dedicated team that has Brisbane's best interests at heart. I want to show what Brisbane can offer by creating long lasting relationships with event organisers and assisting them to give delegates the most authentic and memorable experiences of the Brisbane region.

I am proud to be part of a team making an impact to support our members as we navigate through uncertain times, by amplifying their innovations that have come as a result of businesses needing to alter the way they operate. By personifying Brisbane's warm, welcoming and collaborative approach, I aim to inspire event organisers to choose Brisbane for business events and ultimately contribute to the city's economic recovery and future prosperity.

What is unique about your destination that no other destination has to offer?

Brisbane is an open-air city with a river at its heart. Boasting an enviable sub-tropical lifestyle with around 300 days of sunshine a year, Brisbane is an urban capital surrounded by many unique tourism experiences. With world-class infrastructure and more than \$10 billion in planned future tourism investment, Brisbane is a growing city recognised as an Asia Pacific hub for research and innovation. Brisbane is also a sustainable city with vast parklands, bridges and cycling networks that reflect a proud commitment to the natural environment. This, along with a relaxed lifestyle and warm, welcoming people, make Brisbane a top choice for business events.

The best part of connecting with conference organisers based both nationally and internationally has been getting to know them, their needs and what makes their event unique. Event organisers also have the option to 'own the city'. This means we will activate Brisbane with lighting, activities, accommodation deals and much more for the duration of the event. Connecting the city's cultural precinct and thriving urban hubs with experiences of hinterland, rainforest, bay and bush provides the ultimate combination for an authentic event experience.

As a future bureau leader, what do you think is needed to be successful in this competitive marketplace?

A successful bureau leader should understand what sets their city apart from other destinations and help to continually improve and promote those attributes. Good relationships with local suppliers ensure the best deals and similarly, collaborative relationships with tourism and government are critical to achieving an event-friendly city. With the recent global pandemic, it was beneficial for my team to work in collaboration with Tourism and Events Queensland and the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre to ensure that all event agreements were honoured and conference organisers were delivered as many flexible options as possible. Being proactive when it comes to bringing events to your city is also essential in an internationally competitive market. Thorough research and having the ability to customise what your city can offer means getting that extra edge and it's best to be as authentic and genuine as possible throughout this process.