

2025 MAJOR EVENTS STRATEGY FOR THE ACT

*Vibrant
Canberra*



ACT
Government



CANBERRA





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INTRODUCTION

Canberra is a city like no other.

A great city is built on great people and our nation's capital is considered to be one of the world's most liveable cities, with some of the happiest, healthiest and most active residents in the country.

Our task now is to ensure that as Canberra grows and develops we continue to enhance the liveability and social wellbeing of our city.

The *2025 Major Events Strategy for the ACT* recognises the importance of major events and the vital role they play in making our city a great place to live, work and visit.

Vibrant, diverse and engaging events bring a city to life by bringing communities and people together. They provide visitors with a reason to travel and stay at a destination, bringing with them significant economic and social returns which ultimately benefit all Canberrans.

Celebrating our centenary helped us recognise what's special about our city and provides us with the opportunity to position Canberra as an event-friendly city now and into the future. As a government and as a community, we must build on that momentum and create that future together.

Guided by an overarching events policy, this Strategy is a blueprint for enhancing and developing our city's existing major events, while also placing greater importance on the acquisition of new and exclusive major events.

Over the next decade the Strategy aims to position Canberra as an event-friendly city, leveraging the benefits of hosting major events which reflect our capital's essence and personality. We will build a portfolio of aspirational and distinctive major events that are key drivers to growing our visitor economy, and promote Canberra as a vibrant, dynamic, creative and inclusive city for all people.

Through a coordinated and collaborative approach from industry and government, together we will ensure that Canberra is recognised as an innovative and creative destination renowned for its world-class major events.



ACT Chief Minister Andrew Barr MLA
September 2017

VISION:
TO HAVE CANBERRA
RECOGNISED AS A
WORLD-CLASS EVENTS
DESTINATION. ONE
WHOSE EVENTS REFLECT
THE CITY'S ESSENCE
AND PERSONALITY.

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

OUR AIM

Our aim is to build on our position as an event-friendly city and to reinvent and grow our portfolio of aspirational and distinctive major events.

These events will be key to growing the value of the visitor economy, as well as promoting Canberra as a vibrant, dynamic, creative and inclusive city for people to work, live, visit, study and invest.

A STRATEGIC APPROACH
WILL ENSURE A CLEAR
PATH TO MAXIMISING
OPPORTUNITIES,
DELIVERING POSITIVE
OUTCOMES FOR THE
VISITOR ECONOMY AND
CREATING LASTING
BENEFITS TO THE ACT.

KEY OBJECTIVES

In supporting the vision and aim, the objectives of the Major Events Strategy for the ACT are to:

- 1. Bring to life the essence of Brand Canberra:** ensuring major events are confident, bold and ready and enhancing the appeal and reputation of Canberra as an innovation city, a creative city and an arts city.
- 2. Create social and community benefits:** contributing to the vibrancy and liveability of the city by bringing communities together and enhancing social wellbeing.
- 3. Grow the value of the visitor economy:** contributing to overnight expenditure and enabling the ACT to reach its Tourism 2020 target of \$2.5 billion in overnight expenditure.
- 4. Ensure positive legacies for the city:** enabling lasting economic, social and cultural benefits, utilising existing assets and infrastructure, attracting new investment and establishing Canberra's reputation as a world-class events destination.
- 5. Establish support structures for major event organisers:** to enable event development and self-sustainable growth, reducing the long-term reliance on ACT Government funding.

The ACT Visitor Economy encompasses a range of industry sectors that provide goods and services to people visiting the city for a range of purposes which include (but are not limited to) leisure, to see relatives and friends, for business (including conventions and conferences), to attend events, education and employment.

OUR STRATEGY

Delivery of the Major Events Strategy for the ACT and its key objectives will require a coordinated and collaborative approach with both government and wider industry stakeholders. Our strategy will focus on five key priorities:

1 Create the right environment with the right structure and resources

To ensure Canberra is competitively positioned to successfully reinvent and grow our major events offering we will:

- Review existing organisational structures, programs and funding arrangements for major events within the ACT Government. This will ensure we are competitively positioned to develop and promote major events in the ACT.
- Adopt a standardised approach to major event consideration and assessment across the ACT Government and ensure processes are easily understood.
- Establish a framework that permits multi-year agreements for permits/licences and funding.
- Explore the feasibility of external event delivery and commercialisation of some of the ACT's owned major events.

2 Create a coordinated approach involving both government and industry stakeholders

To grow the value of the visitor economy and jointly promote Canberra as a vibrant, dynamic and creative city we will:

- Establish an industry-wide Major Events Advisory Group, chaired by the ACT Government, to enhance industry knowledge, increase participation in major events and commit to promoting Canberra as an event-friendly destination.
- Work in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders to ease regulatory burdens and remove unnecessary red tape for major event organisers.
- Develop transparent and consistent systems for major event identification, selection, measurement and evaluation — ensuring the ACT Government's vision to have Canberra recognised as a world-class events destination remains central.

3 Create a portfolio of major events that have strong audience appeal and that leverage the ACT's unique attributes

To ensure a diverse portfolio of appealing major events that leverage Canberra's unique attributes, natural advantages and drives visitation we will:

- Develop a Major Events Calendar for Canberra that includes a diverse portfolio of both Tier 1 anchor events (e.g. Floriade) and Tier 2 one-off major events (e.g. One Day International cricket match) featuring our national attractions and cultural institutions, our seasonal climate and natural open spaces, and diverse range of experiences so close together.
- Implement dedicated marketing and promotional activity around both the calendar itself, as well as its key constituent events. The calendar will be a valuable resource to assist locals and visitors with holiday and leisure planning, drive event attendances and encourage repeat visitation to Canberra.

4 Consistently measure, monitor and review success

To ensure an objective and transparent major event evaluation that effectively measures a range of economic and brand outcomes we will:

- Develop a consistent approach to the collection of economic impact information and brand measures to determine the holistic performance of all major events. Consistency between event evaluations will enable comparison for benchmarking and ROI.
- Develop a low-cost, simple to administer event evaluation toolkit for all major event organisers.
- Develop a consistent methodology framework for all third-party evaluations undertaken for major events.

5 Ensure access to the right event venues with the right services

To ensure the ACT has the right major event infrastructure capabilities we will:

- Undertake a comprehensive venue audit and identify opportunities for future development of ACT major event infrastructure.



THE ACT GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED
TO A ONE-CITY APPROACH AND WILL
PROMOTE CANBERRA AS A WORLD-CLASS
MAJOR EVENTS DESTINATION.

ONE CITY APPROACH

EVENT-FRIENDLY CITY

The ACT Government is committed to working in partnership with industry to strengthen our position as an event-friendly city.

The ACT Government has already committed to establishing a new Canberra Arts Biennial event and a new festival that will showcase Canberra's world leading innovation network and cultural and creative industries.

Enterprise Canberra, on behalf of the ACT Government, is committed to building and nurturing Canberra's major event calendar through event attraction, acquisition, development and promotion.

This includes the management of major event funding applications and assessment processes, in addition to targeted funding programs designed to meet the requirements of particular sectors.

Through Access Canberra, government agencies work together through a central contact point to assist event organisers in gaining their necessary event approvals. Access Canberra is the channel to secure permits, approvals and licences to stage events.

It is important that major events and their associated benefits are acknowledged and supported by all government agencies in a cohesive manner. Access Canberra's Event Approval Team will take a lead role in assisting event organisers and providing them with a coordinated experience for liaison and referral across government.

WE WILL CONTINUE
TO DEVELOP A WHOLE
OF GOVERNMENT
APPROACH TO EVENT
FACILITATION AND
SUPPORT.

The Major Events Strategy supports the ACT Government's Strategic Priorities by:

- Growing the visitor economy
- Creating social and community benefits through enhanced liveability and social inclusion
- Ensuring positive legacies for the city through urban renewal and better transport
- Continuing to support a healthy and active community

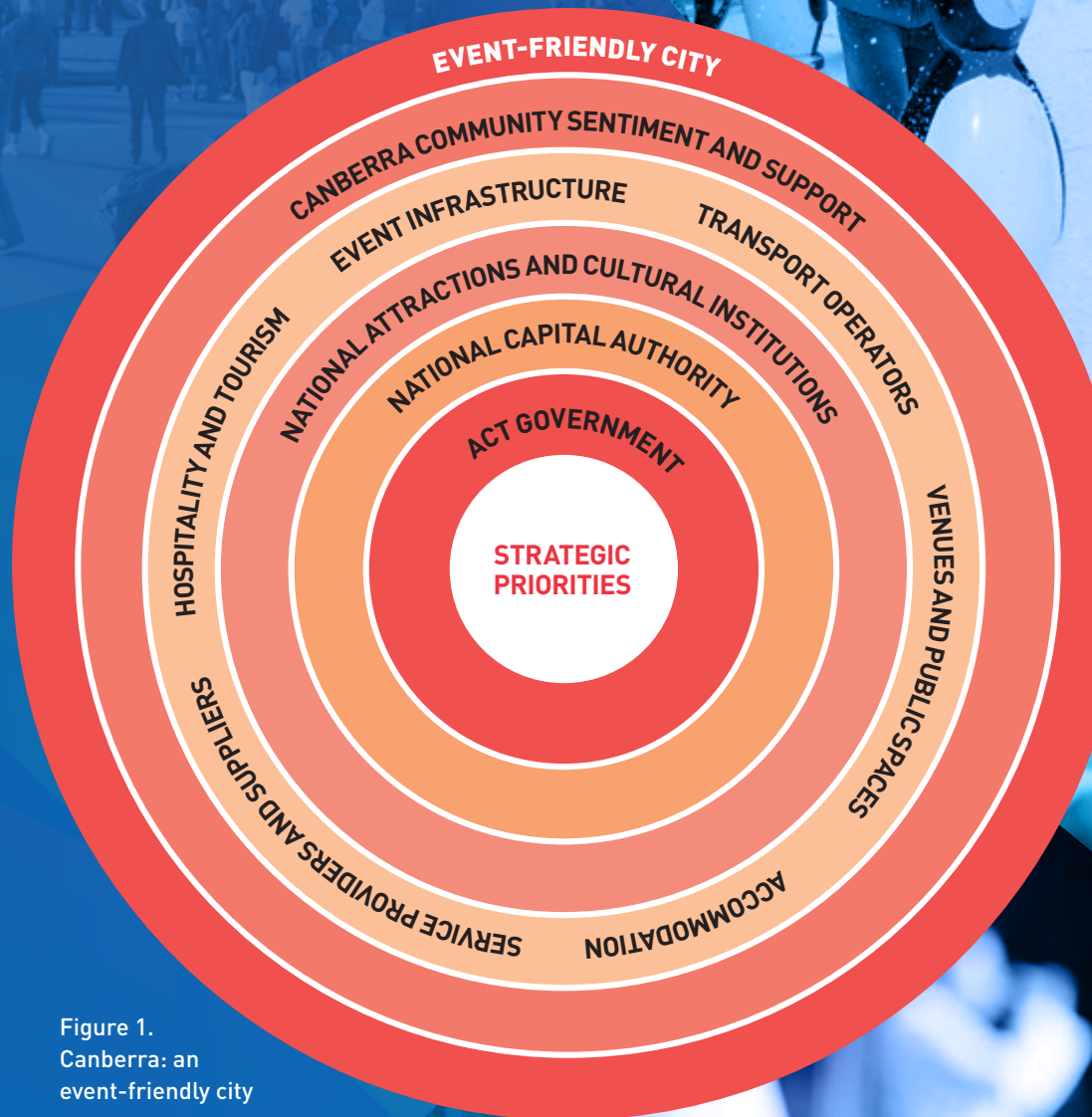


Figure 1.
Canberra: an
event-friendly city



ACT EVENTS POLICY

The ACT Events Policy currently in development provides an overarching whole-of-government framework for realising the full potential of Canberra's events sector — covering events managed and delivered by the ACT Government, along with those events operated or owned by community groups, commercial event organisers and associations. It is underpinned by key guiding principles that outline priorities for event investment and development, including events that grow the ACT economy, events that deliver strong social and community benefits, and events that enhance recognition of Canberra's vibrancy and liveability. In maximising the associated benefits for the Canberra region and strengthening our position as an event friendly city, there is also a clear focus on developing a whole-of-government approach to event facilitation and support.

CLASSIFYING EVENTS

A key area of focus of the Major Event Strategy for the ACT is to identify major events that will deliver the greatest return on investment and/or make the greatest contribution to the Canberra brand and ACT community.

The term 'major event' is a classification given to events that generate significant, immediate and long-term economic, social and cultural benefits to a destination. As shown in Figure 2, major events form part of the ACT's event portfolio, along with global, regional and local/community events.

Regular anchor and one-off feature events are held throughout the year, with these events catering to different audiences and meeting different objectives. Although Canberra does not have the necessary infrastructure to host some global events in their entirety, such as an Olympic Games, it has demonstrated its capacity to deliver smaller-scale components of a global event, when it is shared across cities. The AFC Asian Cup football tournament in January 2015 is an excellent example. For this reason global events have been included in the city's event portfolio.

Regional, local and community events as well as conferences and business events are recognised as important contributors to the ACT.

Major events are classified in the following way:

- **Tier 1: Regular Anchor Events** — these are recurring events that generate significant return on investment and visitation outcomes. Examples include Floriade and Summernats. These events are automatically associated with the destination (in the same way that the Elvis Festival is associated with Parkes and the Vivid Festival with Sydney).
- **Tier 2: One-off Major Events** — these are one-off feature events that generate significant media coverage and raise brand awareness. An example includes a One Day International cricket match. These events drive visitation but to a lesser extent than Tier 1 events and are not linked or directly associated with the destination.

The ACT's major events portfolio needs to include a combination of both Tier 1 and Tier 2 events, carefully weighing the level of investment required with the economic, social and cultural outcomes that will be delivered.

ANCHOR EVENTS
ARE SYNONYMOUS
WITH THE
DESTINATION.

MILESTONES AND TARGETS


Major events will contribute to the visitor economy, ultimately helping to deliver the overarching ACT Tourism 2020 goal of growing overnight expenditure to \$2.5 billion by December 2020. Major events can also contribute to enhanced brand awareness and appeal which demonstrate an increased commitment towards visitation to Canberra as a result of attending events.

Figure 2.
ACT Event
Classification
Pyramid



	TIER 1 Regular anchor events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchor events, synonymous with Canberra • Recurring • Significant economic ROI and visitation outcomes • Social and community • Brand experience and appeal • Legacy 	TIER 2 One-off major events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-off strategic events • Generate significant media coverage and raise brand awareness • Not specifically linked to a destination • Visitation driven to a lesser degree • Social and community • Brand experience and appeal • Legacy
Global		AFC Asian Cup ICC Cricket World Cup Rugby League World Cup
Major	Floriade / Floriade NightFest Enlighten National Multicultural Festival ANZAC Day National Ceremony Summernats	Qantas Wallabies versus British and Irish Lions Rugby League Anzac Test Match T20 Big Bash League Final Major tourism exhibitions (e.g. <i>A History of the World in 100 Objects</i>) Blockbuster exhibitions (e.g. <i>Masterpieces from Paris</i>)
Regional	Truffle Festival Young Cherry Festival Canberra District Wine Harvest Festival	A Day on the Green
Local and Community	Canberra Nara Candle Festival Curry Festival	Laneway events

Table 1. Classification of events in the ACT



CANBERRANS UNDERSTAND
THAT MAJOR EVENTS NOT ONLY
MAKE CANBERRA A BETTER
PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK, BUT
THEY BRING VISITORS WHO FILL
UP HOTEL BEDS, EAT OUT, SHOP
AND GENERALLY SPEND MONEY
WITH ACT BUSINESSES.

Repucom Community Tracker (2015)



EVENTS BENEFIT THE VISITOR ECONOMY

THE OPPORTUNITY

The *2025 Major Events Strategy for the ACT* provides the framework to inform our approach to attracting, staging and promoting major events in the ACT, ensuring we maximise economic and social benefits and strengthen our position as an event-friendly city.

The Strategy focuses on:

- positioning Canberra as a progressive, modern, dynamic, globally relevant and internationally connected city.
- building Canberra's profile as a tourism and events destination.
- enhancing Canberra's major event calendar by hosting a diverse combination of anchor and one-off events.
- continuing to foster and develop vibrancy and community pride, further showcasing Canberra as an attractive place to work, live, visit, study and invest.
- growing opportunities for businesses that provide goods and services to event participants, spectators and organisers.
- growing job opportunities for local Canberrans.
- increased opportunities for organisations and business sectors to be involved in major events and support opportunities for community participation and social inclusion.
- utilisation of existing assets and infrastructure, with the potential to further develop Canberra's infrastructure and facilities, providing a legacy for future generations.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The ACT currently hosts a number of major events each year ranging from regular anchor events such as Floriade and Enlighten, regular participation events including the Kanga Cup and one-off feature events such as the AFC Asian Cup football tournament and One Day International cricket matches.

The ACT Government also invests in blockbuster exhibitions through the Special Event Fund. These events have delivered a range of positive economic and social benefits to Canberra and demonstrated our ability to host world class content in public precincts and event venues.

SINCE 2010,
MAJOR EVENTS
SUPPORTED UNDER THE
ACT GOVERNMENT'S
SPECIAL EVENT FUND
HAVE ATTRACTED
2.96 MILLION ATTENDEES
AND GENERATED
\$636 MILLION IN
ECONOMIC RETURN.

(As at 20 July 2017)

A snapshot of recent and significant events

- Centenary of Canberra
- 2015 AFC Asian Cup football tournament
- 2015 ICC Cricket World Cup
- Blockbuster art and cultural exhibitions
- Floriade and NightFest
- Enlighten and Enlighten Night Noodle Markets
- Summernats
- Kanga Cup
- Commemorative events, such as ANZAC Day and the Centenary of ANZAC
- Canberra Balloon Spectacular
- Brumbies, Raiders, and GWS Giants games
- One Day International (ODI) cricket matches
- National Multicultural Festival
- National Folk Festival
- Canberra Day celebrations
- Black Opal Stakes
- Skyfire
- Symphony in the Park
- Australian Running Festival

The ACT has seen many changes over the last 10 years, including an increased appetite for major events and its demonstrated capacity to host these events. VisitCanberra has commissioned several studies into understanding major events as drivers of visitation, as well as the impact major events have on both community sentiment and the wider visitor economy.

Research undertaken between 2010 and 2015¹ shows that visitor perceptions of the ACT have shifted, and continue to shift positively. The ACT is increasingly being considered as a short-break destination which offers variety, cultural shows and entertainment. Canberra now has a more desirable brand, while intent for attending major festivals and art exhibitions is growing.

ACT community sentiment for major events is strong. Research into public support for events in 2015² shows that:

- 93 per cent of Canberrans believe it is important for the ACT to host major sporting, arts and culture and community events.
- 85 per cent of Canberrans believe major events make the ACT a more enjoyable place to live.
- Approximately 80 per cent of Canberrans believe that major events help to enhance community spirit, pride and enjoyment and that using taxpayer money to stage events in the ACT is reasonable.

Further research undertaken by Tourism Research Australia (2015) showed that major events were an important driver of tourism demand both nationally and for the ACT. Specifically, key findings of the study show:

- Floriade and NightFest along with sport spectator events such as football and the ICC Cricket World Cup were identified as strong demand drivers as they had high rates of awareness and preference.
- Participation sports events offer strong niche appeal, with participants willing to travel to attend an event.
- Autumn is the preferred season to travel to the ACT for most major events.
- All major events need to be supported by strong awareness driving activity to stimulate overnight visitation from interstate and overseas attendees.

1. Instinct and Reason, *Canberra Perceptions Study 2010 and 2015*
2. Repucom, *Community Impact Tracker 2015*

