

Media Release: April 2024

## **Austrade and GetAboutAble partnership:**

### **Extended 'Early Bird' registration for the Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Conference (AITCAP) in Melbourne/Naarm on 27 August 2024**

[GetAboutAble](#), supported by the Australian Government through its '[Choose Tourism](#)' program, is offering a special 'Early Bird' registration rate for the upcoming Accessible & Inclusive Tourism Conference (AITCAP) to be held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre on 27 August 2024.

This partnership will allow delegates to register their attendance at AITCAP for a limited \$100-off special rate, as an extension of the 'Early Bird' offer applicable to the first 400 registrations of the 2024 conference.

GetAboutAble is the leading Australian accessible tourism consultancy.

In Australia, one in 5 people live with a disability, and people travelling with accessibility needs represent over \$13.5 billion in revenue for the Australian visitor economy\*, highlighting the need for the industry to better understand and service our accessible and inclusive visitors and their companions.

Now in its fourth year, AITCAP is an annual event organised and delivered by [GetAboutAble](#) – an Australian social enterprise founded by Dr Yasmine Gray, focused on supporting travel and leisure businesses to improve their access and inclusion for people with disability. This year's event partners include The Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC) and Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. Sponsors involved in the day's programming include Austrade, the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, and City of Melbourne.

The AITCAP conference is expected to welcome 300 delegates, with a lineup of speakers and topics that will address insights and share research aimed at tourism operators, policy makers, destinations and organisations. The day's format will include a mix of keynote speakers, business case studies, new research and data, complemented by networking sessions and panel discussions led by thought leaders in this tourism space covering topics including inclusive marketing, inclusive employment, innovation and accessible co-design for business growth within this specific sector.

As part of the conference, complementary themed industry famils will be held to showcase Melbourne-based businesses delivering impressive examples of access and inclusion via their tourism operations.

Currently in Australia, around 18% of the population (or 4.4 million people) have a disability. An additional 22% (or 5.5 million) have a long-term health condition.\*\*

Accessibility and inclusivity not only affects those with a disability, but also the growing ageing population, those with a neurodiverse ability or gender diversity, and families who may make use of items like prams and strollers and require ease of access at tourism and leisure facilities.

Yasmine Gray, GetAboutAble's founder and AITCAP creator, says: "The accessible and inclusive tourism market is both far bigger and easier to attract than many imagine. With the industry looking at ways to attract new income

\*Source: National Visitor Survey 2021, [Tourism Research Australia](#)

\*\*Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, '[People with Disability in Australia](#)' web report, last updated 5 July 2022

streams into the future, I urge everybody to consider the simple fact that 20% of people travel with some form of disability.”

“The Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Conference was first introduced in 2021 to address the needs of our accessible population, and to empower tourism operators with the knowledge and skills on making their businesses more accessible and inclusive now and into the future. This year, it will continue to be a first-class event providing knowledge, resources and networks to the tourism industry to improve their accessibility and capitalise on this valuable market.”

Accessible tourism is a priority of THRIVE 2030, Australia’s national strategy for the long-term sustainable growth of the visitor economy. THRIVE 2030 also prioritises actions that help tourism businesses address their workforce challenges. The Australian Government’s ‘Choose Tourism’ program, delivered by Austrade, is promoting opportunities for tourism businesses to build diverse workforces, including by drawing from Australian Government employment programs, including JobAccess, which supports businesses to employ people with disability.

Austrade’s Visitor Economy General Manager, Ms Sam Palmer, said she was excited for this important conference. “We are proud to support an event that will help tourism businesses to better serve the many and increasing number of travellers with accessibility needs.”

“Many businesses also face workforce shortages so we’re sharing how employing people from diverse backgrounds, including people with disability, could benefit their business. Free Australian Government resources like [jobaccess.gov.au](http://jobaccess.gov.au) can help businesses,” Ms Palmer said.

#### Registration for the conference is currently open:

- **Austrade extended Early Bird Offer: \$100 off ticket subsidy:** open to the first 400 delegate registrations, \$350 per person (including morning/afternoon tea and lunch)
- Register attendance at: [events.humanitix.com/accessible-and-inclusive-tourism-conference-2024](https://events.humanitix.com/accessible-and-inclusive-tourism-conference-2024)

For more information, visit [The Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Conference](#).

#### **ENDS**

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\*Source: National Visitor Survey 2021, [Tourism Research Australia](#)

\*\*Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, [‘People with Disability in Australia’](#) web report, last updated 5 July 2022