



Press Release – 11 September 2008

'Sabre' the moment - Sci-Fi fans set to 'beam in' on Melbourne

Sci-Fi fans from around the world are set to 'beam in' on Melbourne, as the city plays host to the 68th World Science Fiction Convention - 'Aussiecon 4'.

The annual convention of the World Science Fiction Society, which has affiliations in more than 30 countries, Aussiecon 4 is expected to attract 3,000 Science Fiction fans to Melbourne in 2010.

Aussiecon 4, secured for Melbourne by the Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB), will include panel discussions on a variety of science fiction subjects, such as technology of the future, writing, publishing and the philosophical and sociological implications of the genre's works.

Aussiecon 4 Co-Chair, Mr Perry Middlemiss, says this is an exciting time for Australian Science Fiction, and that, given growing interest in the genre, Melbourne is set to see the largest Aussiecon to date.

"In the past ten years the science fiction, fantasy, horror and young adult literary genres have seen significant growth in Australia in both quantity and quality, with many new and established writers gaining recognition internationally. Aussiecon 4 will showcase the work of Australia's emerging writers, but will also attract well known and highly acclaimed writers from around the world."

Aussiecon 4 Co-Chair, Ms Rose Mitchell, said another highlight of the event will be the Hugo Awards.

"The Hugo Awards celebrate professional and non-professional achievements in an array of Science Fiction forms, including writing, editing and best dramatic presentation, which this year was awarded to an episode of the BBC's *Doctor Who*," Ms Mitchell said.

Sandra Chipchase, Chief Executive Officer of the Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau, which bid for and won the right to host Aussiecon 4, said winning the event attests to Melbourne's diverse appeal.

"Melbourne was chosen to host this event because of its world-class facilities, its cosmopolitan culture and of course its burgeoning science fiction community.

"Within the last financial year, MCVB's activities attracted in excess of 70,000 delegates from a variety of organisations to Victoria, injecting more than \$261 million into the State economy. Securing Aussiecon 4 for Melbourne attests to the appeal of the city to a diverse range of people from a wide range of international associations."

The new Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) will host Aussiecon 4.

MCEC's Chief Executive, Leigh Harry, said that as most World Science Fiction Conventions are held in North America, it was a definite coup that Melbourne has been chosen as the venue for 2010.

"The Aussiecon 4 Convention will be held at the new Melbourne Convention Centre. With delegates arriving from all over the world and all around Australia to join the conference, this is another great opportunity to showcase the new Convention Centre and the city of Melbourne."

Aussiecon 4 will run for seven days in September 2010, generating \$18m in economic benefit.

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