

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Exhibition: Meetings Africa 2027

Dates: 22 Meetings Africa Stakeholder Dinner & Official Welcome
23 Trade Floor Opening Bell-Ring

Exhibition Days: 23 - 24 February 2027

Services: Meetings Africa Stakeholder Dinner & Official Welcome

Venue: Sandton Convention Centre

Event Outcome

To deliver a strategically balanced Stakeholder Dinner that appropriately profiles the host city and destination, while ensuring equitable recognition and visibility of the respective Meetings Africa bid partners and maintaining Meetings Africa as the lead brand and platform.

The key challenge is to:

- Provide the host city with meaningful opportunities to showcase its destination, hospitality, culture and Business Events capability;
- Appropriately recognise and profile the respective bid partners in accordance with agreed roles, commitments and contractual obligations;
- Achieve an appropriate balance between South African Tourism, the National Department of Tourism, the host city and other relevant partners, without creating competing messages or disproportionate brand visibility;
- Ensure that partner recognition is integrated naturally into the event experience rather than creating excessive formalities or multiple stakeholder addresses;
- Maintain a coherent strategic narrative and clear hierarchy of messaging throughout the event;
- Ensure that the Stakeholder Dinner remains first and foremost an official Meetings Africa engagement, while providing meaningful value and visibility to the partners that enable and support the platform; and

- Leverage the dinner as an opportunity to demonstrate the strength of collaboration between national, provincial/local government and industry in growing South Africa's Business Events sector.
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Operational objective:

The Supplier should take cognisance of the following operational challenges and provide appropriate solutions and mitigation measures as part of the proposed concept:

- Transition to the new opening format: Effectively managing the shift from the traditional trade-floor opening to the Stakeholder Dinner as the formal opening engagement, while ensuring that stakeholders clearly understand the respective purpose of the two events.
- Stakeholder and protocol coordination: Managing the requirements of the Minister, Deputy Minister, government representatives, South African Tourism Board & EXCO leadership, host city and other bid partners without creating an overly complex or prolonged programme.
- **Programme discipline:** Ensuring that formalities at the Stakeholder Dinner remain concise and that the programme starts and concludes within the stipulated times, particularly given that delegates commence formal business engagements the following morning.
- Create an invitation-based stakeholder audience, including RSVP mechanism.
- Balancing VIP requirements and inclusivity: Providing appropriate security, protocol and seating arrangements for VIP guests without creating an experience that feels disconnected from the broader stakeholder audience.
- Host-city integration: Selecting and operationalising a venue and experience that meaningfully profiles Johannesburg while remaining accessible, safe and logistically practical for Meetings Africa delegates.
- Transport and delegate movement: Where transportation is required, managing the movement of guests between hotels, and the dinner venue, including Johannesburg traffic conditions, arrival peaks and safe return transportation.
- Programme, catering and technical integration: Coordinating speeches, entertainment, catering service and technical production so that these elements complement rather than interrupt one another.
- Security and safety: Managing appropriate event security, Ministerial/VIP security requirements, access control, emergency procedures and overall guest safety.
- Day 1 bell-ringing logistics: Ensuring that the 10h00 bell-ringing is visible and media-friendly while not creating congestion at the entrance to the trade floor or delaying delegates proceeding to scheduled meetings.
- Precise timing: Ensuring that the bell is rung at exactly 10h00 and that the trade floor transitions immediately into normal trading without additional proceedings.

- Media management: Accommodating photographers, videographers and media around both the Stakeholder Dinner and bell-ringing without compromising guest movement, security or the delegate experience.
- Contingency planning: Pr
- Providing appropriate contingencies for late programme changes, Ministerial availability, technical failure, power disruption, transport delays and weather-related challenges where applicable.

Marketing and Communications

Clearly communicate the revised Meetings Africa 2027 opening format, ensuring that all exhibitors, buyers, media and stakeholders understand that the formal welcome and strategic opening proceedings will take place at the Stakeholder Dinner on the evening preceding Day 1, thereby allowing the trade floor to commence without disruption to scheduled business meetings.

Communications should:

- Clearly communicate that the Meetings Africa trade floor will officially open for business at 10h00 on Day 1.
- Position the Stakeholder Dinner as the platform for the official welcome, strategic messaging and formal proceedings associated with the opening of Meetings Africa 2027.
- Communicate that the commencement of trading on Day 1 will be marked by a brief symbolic bell-ringing at 10h00, rather than a traditional trade-floor opening ceremony.
- Ensure that exhibitors and buyers understand that scheduled diary meetings will commence as planned, without delay or disruption caused by formal opening proceedings.
- Where the Minister of Tourism is confirmed to participate in the Stakeholder Dinner and/or official bell-ringing, appropriately incorporate this into relevant stakeholder and media communications.
- Build awareness and recognition of the bell-ringing as the symbolic “open for business” moment for Meetings Africa 2027.
- Ensure that the revised format, timing, locations and participation requirements are communicated sufficiently in advance across the relevant Meetings Africa communication channels.

Our Main Message

What is the core message we want to deliver?

Stakeholder Dinner

Strategic messaging should reinforce information linked to the official theme that:

- Meetings Africa is where Africa unlocks opportunity.
 - Meetings Africa facilitates quality connections that translate into meaningful business opportunities, partnerships and economic value.
 - Africa is a competitive, capable and compelling Business Events destination with an increasingly important role in the global industry.
 - Collaboration between government, destinations and industry is critical to unlocking the full potential of Africa's Business Events economy.
 - Business Events are catalysts for tourism, trade, investment, knowledge exchange, innovation and broader economic development.
 - South Africa and the SANCB remain committed to working collaboratively with industry to grow the sector and strengthen the continent's global competitiveness.
 - The host city is an integral partner in delivering the Meetings Africa experience and showcasing South Africa's Business Events capability.
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- All strategic messaging should be underpinned by and aligned to the approved Meetings Africa 2027 theme and positioning (TBC).

Day 1 – Official Start of Trading

The communication should be deliberately simple and business-focused:

“Meetings Africa 2027 is officially open for business.”

The 10h00 bell-ringing should symbolically mark the commencement of trading and reinforce that the connections, conversations and opportunities that Meetings Africa exists to facilitate are now underway.

Brand Positioning

Communications should continue to amplify Meetings Africa's overarching proposition, appropriately evolved and aligned to the final approved Meetings Africa 2027 theme.

Objective

The Meetings Africa Stakeholder Dinner will serve as the official strategic welcome and formal opening engagement for Meetings Africa 2027, hosted on the evening preceding the opening of the trade floor.

The purpose of the dinner is to bring together key government, industry and strategic stakeholders in an appropriate environment to formally welcome delegates, communicate the strategic priorities and ambitions for Meetings Africa and the Business Events industry, and strengthen relationships between South African Tourism, the SANCB, government, industry and key partners.

By consolidating the formal opening proceedings into the Stakeholder Dinner, Meetings Africa aims to protect the integrity of the trade show and maximise trading time on Day 1, enabling the trade floor to open at 10h00 without lengthy formal proceedings or disruption to scheduled buyer and exhibitor meetings.

The dinner should:

- Officially welcome key stakeholders to Meetings Africa 2027;
- Provide an appropriate platform for the Minister of Tourism and other identified leadership to address the industry;
- Communicate the strategic priorities of the National Department of Tourism, South African Tourism and the SANCB as they relate to the Business Events industry;
- Bring the approved Meetings Africa 2027 theme and strategic positioning to life;
- Reinforce Meetings Africa's role in advancing Africa's Business Events industry and connecting the continent to global business opportunities;
- Strengthen relationships and collaboration between government, industry, destinations, partners and key stakeholders;
- Provide an environment conducive to high-level networking and stakeholder engagement;
- Showcase South African hospitality, cuisine, creativity and sense of place; and
- Generate appropriate media, stakeholder and digital content that supports the positioning of Meetings Africa.

Event Experience

The Stakeholder Dinner should be positioned as a premium but warm and engaging stakeholder experience, balancing the necessary formalities with meaningful networking and hospitality.

While the dinner will accommodate formal proceedings, these should be concise, purposeful and strategically relevant. The programme should avoid lengthy speeches or unnecessary ceremonial elements.

The overall experience should reflect the stature of Meetings Africa while retaining the warmth, energy and contemporary African character of the brand.

Programme and Formal Proceedings

The supplier will be required to develop and manage the complete programme and running order for the dinner in consultation with South African Tourism and relevant stakeholders.

The programme should make provision, where applicable, for:

- Guest arrival and welcome;
- Pre-dinner networking;
- Formal welcome;
- Ministerial address;
- South African Tourism and/or SANCB strategic messaging where required;
- Bid Parties inclusion;
- Appropriate acknowledgement of key stakeholders and partners;
- Introduction and amplification of the Meetings Africa 2027 theme;
- Dinner service appropriately integrated with the programme;
- Entertainment;
- Networking; and
- Formal close.

The programme should be designed to ensure that strategic messaging is delivered effectively without compromising the networking and hospitality experience.

Guest Profile and Stakeholder Management – PowerPoint slide

The dinner will cater for an invited stakeholder audience, which may include:

- Minister and Deputy Minister of Tourism;
- National Department of Tourism leadership;
- South African Tourism Board and EXCO;
- Government representatives;
- African Ministers and Consulates;
- Bid Parties Representation;
- Exhibitor and industry leadership;
- Strategic partners and sponsors;
- Association and corporate decision-makers;
- Diplomatic representatives where appropriate;
- Media; and
- Other identified VIP and strategic stakeholders.

The supplier will be required to manage invitations, RSVP tracking, guest-list management, protocol requirements, seating allocations and onsite guest management in consultation with South African Tourism.

Venue and Creative Concept

Identify and recommend an appropriate venue that reflects the stature and strategic purpose of the Stakeholder Dinner while providing an authentic Johannesburg and/or South African experience.

The Event Organiser should develop an aesthetically compelling creative concept that:

- Brings the approved Meetings Africa 2027 theme to life;
- Creates an elegant but contemporary African experience;
- Supports formal proceedings and networking;
- Provides appropriate staging and technical capability;
- Creates strong visual and content opportunities; and
- Showcases Johannesburg and South African hospitality where appropriate.

Catering and Hospitality

Develop and manage a premium catering and hospitality experience appropriate to the stature of the event.

Where possible, the culinary experience should provide an opportunity to showcase South African produce, cuisine and contemporary culinary creativity.

The supplier should ensure that catering service is appropriately coordinated with the formal programme so that speeches, entertainment and service do not compete with one another.

All relevant dietary and accessibility requirements must be appropriately accommodated.

Entertainment

Recommend and procure appropriate entertainment that enhances the experience and reflects the character of Meetings Africa and South Africa.

Entertainment should complement rather than dominate the programme and should be strategically positioned within the running order.

Preference should be given, where appropriate, to South African and African creative talent.

Protocol and VIP Management

Develop and implement appropriate protocol arrangements for the Minister, Deputy Minister and other identified VIP guests.

This should include:

- Arrival and departure protocols;
- Holding areas where required;
- Security liaison;
- Seating;
- Order of precedence;

- Speaker management;
- Stage movements;
- Briefing documentation; and
- Coordination with relevant government and South African Tourism protocol teams.

Technical Production

Develop the complete technical rider and manage all technical requirements associated with the dinner, including staging, audio, visual, lighting, presentations, microphones and entertainment requirements.

Full technical rehearsals and programme dry runs should be undertaken prior to guest arrival.

Invitations, RSVP and Guest Management

Develop the electronic invitation and associated event collateral for deployment through the appropriate Meetings Africa channels.

Manage:

- Invitation lists;
- RSVP tracking;
- Confirmations;
- Guest communications;
- Seating plans where applicable;
- Accreditation/access;
- Onsite registration; and
- Guest enquiries.

Media and Communications

The dinner should provide appropriate opportunities for media engagement and content generation without compromising the stakeholder nature of the event.

The Event Organiser should coordinate with the Meetings Africa Marketing and Communications teams to facilitate:

- Official photography and videography;
- Ministerial and leadership content;
- Strategic messaging;
- Social media content;
- Stakeholder interviews where appropriate;
- Theme amplification; and
- Post-event content.

Logistics, Safety and Security

Manage all logistical requirements associated with the dinner, including venue coordination, transport where required, guest movement, security, medical requirements, suppliers, infrastructure, set-up and breakdown.

A comprehensive safety and security plan must be developed, with particular consideration given to Ministerial and VIP security requirements.

Desired Outcome

The Stakeholder Dinner should ensure that Meetings Africa 2027 is formally and strategically opened before the commencement of trading, enabling Day 1 of the show to focus immediately on its core purpose — connecting buyers and exhibitors and facilitating business.

Guests should leave the dinner with a clear understanding of the strategic ambition for Meetings Africa 2027 and the Business Events industry, while having experienced meaningful networking, exceptional South African hospitality and a strong sense of anticipation for the opening of the trade floor the following morning.

Official Opening of the Meetings Africa Trade Floor

Objective

To mark the official opening of the Meetings Africa trade floor at 10h00 on Day 1 through a simple, high-impact and recognisable bell-ringing moment, signalling that Meetings Africa is officially open for business.

In order to maximise trading time and minimise disruption to exhibitors, buyers and scheduled business engagements, there will be no traditional trade floor opening ceremony or formal programme on the morning of Day 1.

Formal proceedings, strategic messaging and stakeholder engagements will be incorporated into the Stakeholder Dinner hosted on the evening preceding the official opening of the trade floor.

Bell-Ringing Opening Moment

The supplier will be required to conceptualise and coordinate a simple bell-ringing activation to mark the official commencement of trading at 10h00.

The activation should include:

- Provision and placement of an appropriate, visually distinctive bell at a strategically prominent location at or near the main entrance/foyer to the trade floor;
- Appropriate Meetings Africa branding and presentation of the bell and surrounding area;
- Identification and coordination of the appropriate stakeholder/s to ring the bell;

- Provision for the Minister of Tourism to participate in the bell-ringing moment, should the Minister be available;
- A short countdown or other simple mechanism immediately preceding 10h00, where appropriate;
- Coordination of the bell-ringing precisely with the official opening time of the trade floor that can be amplified as part of the venue sound-system for delegates already in the exhibition halls;
- Appropriate photography, videography and media positioning to capture the moment;
- Communication of the opening time and bell-ringing moment to exhibitors, buyers, media and relevant stakeholders in advance; and
- Appropriate crowd and access management around the activation without impeding delegate entry onto the trade floor.

Communications

Pre-event and onsite communications should clearly reinforce that the Meetings Africa trade floor opens for business at 10h00.

Where the Minister of Tourism or another senior stakeholder is confirmed to ring the opening bell, this may be appropriately incorporated into media and stakeholder communications.

The bell-ringing should create a recognisable “open for business” moment that can be amplified through Meetings Africa’s digital, social and media platforms.

Key Operational Principle

The bell-ringing is intended to be a brief symbolic opening moment rather than a formal ceremony.

There should be no speeches, formal programme or extended proceedings on the trade floor. The activation should conclude immediately following the bell-ringing, enabling exhibitors and buyers to commence scheduled meetings and business engagements without disruption.

Deliverables required

Stakeholder Dinner - Operational Objectives

The Operational Objectives

1. Maintain the stipulated start time, programme duration and conclusion time, recognising that the event takes place on the evening preceding the commencement of formal Meetings Africa trading.
2. Ensure that formal proceedings are concise, well-paced and engaging, while providing sufficient opportunity for stakeholder networking and relationship-building.

3. Co-ordinate all Ministerial, government, South African Tourism, SANCB and other VIP protocol requirements in advance.
4. Ensure that invited guests receive clear and timely communication regarding the event, RSVP requirements, venue, timing, transport, access and other relevant logistical information.
5. Manage guest lists, RSVP confirmations, seating plans and reserved seating requirements in advance.
6. Ensure the seamless integration of programme, catering, entertainment, technical production and networking so that individual elements do not compete with or disrupt one another.
7. Ensure appropriate provision for media, photography, videography and content capture while maintaining the integrity and flow of the event.
8. Ensure appropriate accessibility, safety, security and emergency arrangements for all guests.

Deliverables Required

The supplier will be required to provide and/or co-ordinate:

1. Venue recommendation and management, including assessment of capacity, accessibility, technical capability, hospitality requirements, security, guest flow and overall suitability.
2. Creative concept and experience design aligned to the Meetings Africa 2027 theme, brand and strategic objectives.
3. Appropriate staging and stage design, including podium/lectern where required, screens, furniture and other infrastructure necessary for the approved programme.
4. Development of a comprehensive technical rider and procurement/management of all technical requirements, including sound, lighting, screens, presentations, autocue where required, microphones and entertainment requirements.
5. Identification, procurement and management of appropriate entertainment and scene-setting elements that enhance the experience without unnecessarily extending the formal programme.
6. Development and management of the guest seating plan, including clearly designated and appropriately reserved seating for Ministers, VIPs and other identified stakeholders.
7. Appropriate provision for persons with disabilities and guests with accessibility requirements, including accessible seating and movement throughout the venue.
8. Development and installation of all required Meetings Africa branding, signage and wayfinding, in accordance with the approved brand guidelines.
9. Management and procurement of catering and beverages, ensuring that service is appropriately integrated into the programme and guest experience.
10. Full technical rehearsal and programme dry run prior to the commencement of the event, including Ministerial and speaker requirements where applicable.

11. Development and implementation of appropriate contingency plans, including technical failure, power disruption, weather where applicable, programme changes and other foreseeable operational risks.

Official Trade Floor Opening – Bell-Ringing

Operational Objective

The activation must be designed to minimise disruption to scheduled buyer and exhibitor diary meetings and should not constitute a formal opening ceremony.

Operational Requirements

The supplier will be required to:

1. Identify and recommend the most appropriate and strategically visible location for the opening bell, preferably within the main foyer or primary entrance to the Meetings Africa trade floor.
2. Source and provide an appropriate, distinctive and aesthetically presented opening bell, including any required mounting or supporting infrastructure.
3. Integrate the bell into the Meetings Africa environment through appropriate branding and design, ensuring that it provides a strong visual and photographic moment without creating unnecessary infrastructure or obstruction.
4. Ensure that the bell-ringing takes place precisely at 10h00, coinciding with the official opening of the trade floor.
5. Coordinate the participation of the Minister of Tourism and/or other designated stakeholder/s who will ring the bell, subject to confirmation.
6. Develop a very brief operational sequence for the moment, which may include an appropriate countdown immediately before 10h00 and the ringing of the bell.
7. Ensure that there are no speeches, formal presentations, entertainment programme or extended proceedings associated with the bell-ringing.
8. Coordinate appropriate media, photography and videography positioning to capture the official opening moment without obstructing delegate access to the trade floor.
9. Develop and manage an appropriate crowd-flow plan to ensure that delegates who wish to observe the bell-ringing can do so without restricting access for delegates proceeding directly to scheduled meetings.
10. Provide appropriate directional signage and wayfinding to the bell location where required.
11. Ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities and provide unobstructed access through the surrounding area.

12. Coordinate all technical requirements, if any, keeping technical infrastructure to the minimum necessary for effective delivery.
13. Complete all installation, branding, testing and operational readiness requirements prior to delegate arrival on Day 1.

Timing Principle

The bell-ringing should be completed within a few minutes and should transition immediately into the opening of the trade floor.

The intended message is simple:

Meetings Africa 2027 is officially open for business.

The activation should create a recognisable opening moment for delegates and media while ensuring that business meetings commence on time and without disruption.

Additional Activation Requirements

AV:	SANCB / or other appropriate AV at introduction (Please refer to the proposed agenda)
Photographer/ Videographer: (Specify)	Photography: high-quality photographs, submitted to us in electronic format, post-event and properly labelled and archived. Videography - High-quality imagery of speakers, entertainment, ambient shots - scenes of the crowd and people arriving. Shots of the countdown and the actual bell-ringing. All images and videos to be provided in high and low-res folders with a mix of portrait and horizontal photos; all captioned and press ready. To be shared with the EMC.

Reporting

Status	Ongoing Weekly and ad-hoc updates as per client request
Onsite Handover	Onsite Handover / Review to client of deliverables as per brief.
Collateral	Where collateral forms part of the brief, a delivery note must accompany the inventory upon delivery, to be signed by a representative.
Closeout	Detailed close-out report, to include photographic evidence of all delivered elements as per brief requirements, to accompany invoice pack per item.

RFP Submissions:

Submission date – 12:00, Friday, 25 September 2026

Please note that the following documentation must be submitted with the application:

- A valid tax clearance certificate
- Certified copies of your company registration
- Certified copy of a valid B-BBEE verification / rating certificate

Please email your proposal to Nomakhosi Khoza – khosi@synergybe.co.za

Queries: Should you have any questions relating to this RFP, please contact **Khosi Khoza** – khosi@synergybe.co.za +27 11 476 5104.

On successful appointment, a Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be provided for all parties. Your primary point of contact will be Synergy Business Events.