

# Seoul

## Where History & Modern Medicine Meet

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If you glance at a map of the world, it seems like Korea's capital sits at the centre. Perhaps that's because the Northeast Asian business hub is home to the world's fourth-largest airport, with flight times as little as two hours from nearby hubs like Beijing. Straddling the line between tradition and modernity, Seoul is a sprawling city where you can walk through living museums (read: ancient palaces) as well as Korea's largest electronics market. It's no wonder groups are embracing the city's energy, helping Seoul rise the ranks as one of the top convention cities not only in Asia, but also in the world.

*Words Lane Nieset*



In 2018, Seoul hosted more than 50 international conferences with over 1,000 delegates—no surprise since the city ranked third in the world for three consecutive years in the UIA Rankings (2015-2017) and 10<sup>th</sup> in ICCA Rankings in 2016 and 2017. The main convention centre, Coex, stands four stories tall with 36,007 sqm of exhibition space and a floor area of 460,000 sqm divided between four specialized exhibition halls, plus a convention hall accommodating up to 7,000. Thanks to its state-of-the-art infrastructure and culture-business platform (featuring one of the largest underground malls in Asia, with over 165,000 sqm of shops and entertainment), Coex has appropriately been dubbed “a future-focused leader of the MICE industry,” hosting high-profile events like the G20 Seoul Summit in 2010 and the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit in 2012, which drew 10,000 attendees and leaders from 53 countries.

*“Robust biomedical R&D, expertise, infrastructure, and cutting-edge technology make Seoul an appealing destination for medical congresses,”* explains Kyungjae Lee, director of the Seoul Convention Bureau’s MICE Marketing Team. *“It’s truly the passion from Seoul’s local associations that energizes our bidding efforts. They’re motivated to not just participate but lead – and international association boards are noticing this.”*

### BIOMEDICAL POWERHOUSE

Seoul’s status as a biomedical research powerhouse, home to some of the world’s top medical schools (*The Times Higher Education* list of top 500 medical schools ranked Sungkyunkwan University as 41<sup>st</sup> and Seoul National University as 49<sup>th</sup>), has helped the city attract a number of prestigious medical events. In addition to the annual three-day Transcatheter Cardiovascular Therapeutics Asia Pacific (TCTAP) summit, which brings 4,000 doctors from 50 countries, Coex has hosted the 2007 World Lung Cancer Congress, attended by 5,500

delegates; the 2011 World Congress on Dermatology, with 12,000 attendees; and the 2015 World Allergy Congress, attracting 4,000.

*“Our city stands out as a destination for medical congresses with its cutting-edge medical procedures, abundant research, hospital infrastructure rich with data, and overall city infrastructure and services that allow for smoother information-sharing and event experiences,”* says Professor Ja-Young (Jay) Kwon, Korean Society of Ultrasound

## Stats on Seoul

- 55 dividable meeting rooms and 4 exhibition halls at the four-floor Coex Convention & Exhibition Center
- 47,621 sqm of convention space and 111 different meeting spaces hosting up to 20,000 people at the World Trade Center Coex MICE Cluster (plus 3 five-star hotels; 1,163 shops; 181 food and beverage options)
- 440 hotels (the majority of which are three- to five-star) offering over 58,000 rooms
- 84 airlines and over 180 cities connected to Incheon International Airport (located one hour from Seoul), awarded ‘World’s Best Airport Service’ for twelve consecutive years

in Obstetrics and Gynecology Chair of International Affairs. *“We have plenty of passionate medical professionals seeking new information – making it an ideal place to host congresses in this field.”*

### FUTURE-FORWARD HEALTHCARE

A recent article in Gulf News stated that Korea is “emerging as a new leader on the global healthcare market.” In an international comparison of five-year cancer survival rates, Korea comes ahead of the

U.S., Canada and Japan, with a 70 per cent success rate for all cancer types. In Seoul, the municipality set up the Seoul Bio Hub in October 2017 to help build a world-renowned biotech cluster, offering early-stage biohealth startups the tools they need to evolve and enter global markets.

Ideally located in the northeastern neighbourhood of Hongneung, Seoul Bio Hub taps into the talent of the surrounding medical schools and 5,000-plus Ph.D.s working in the life sciences and biomedical business. In an article in *The Korea Herald*, Seoul Bio Hub General Director Woo Jung-hoon is quoted saying: *“We’re preparing curriculums with the medical schools in the area to give medical professionals a glimpse of Seoul Bio Hub and experience how medicine is evolving. It was sensational back when doctors began moving into the pharma industry. And now, we hope for something similar [with business innovation].”*

Next on the horizon: blockchain-based medical services and artificial intelligence-focused drug development, all part of the national strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Startups like XBLOCK SYSTEMS are already looking into using blockchain technology for medical proof application services by creating public key infrastructure certificates.

### CASE STUDY

#### 31<sup>ST</sup> WORLD CONGRESS ON ULTRASOUND IN OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY 2021

In October 2-5, 2021, Seoul will host the World Congress on Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology, organized by the International Society of Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology (ISUOG). *“Hosting the World Congress on Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology presents an opportunity to showcase Korea’s advanced developments in the ultrasound sector to a worldwide audience,”* explains Dr. Moon Young Kim M.D., president



BONGEUNSA TEMPLE OVERLOOKING COEX

of the Korean Society of Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology (KSUOG). *"More so, it is a step forward for KSUOG as it will promote active academic exchanges with overseas medical practitioners and academics, as well as strengthen the knowledge expertise in the domestic region."*

The group bidding process for the 2,000-person congress (1,500 of which are coming from outside Korea) started in the summer of 2017, with KSUOG partnering with the Seoul Convention Bureau, Korea MICE Bureau, Coex and The Plan Co., a local PCO. *"KSUOG made use of the Seoul Convention Bureau's bidding clinic – an intensive program based on over ten years of bidding know-how – that assisted us with fine-tuning our presentation slides and delivery,"* explains Professor Ja-Young (Jay) Kwon, KSUOG Chair of International Affairs. *"These services helped immensely with not only our bidding presentation last year at the London headquarters of ISUOG, next to Tokyo and Greater Noida's. I believe the unified effort from KSUOG's steering committee and society members, in addition to the wealth of support and sponsorship we received, led to our*

*successful bid for the 31<sup>st</sup> World Congress on Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology in Seoul."*

#### SEOUL MICE ALLIANCE

As a way to promote Seoul's meetings infrastructure to planners around the world, the city set up the Seoul MICE Alliance (SMA), a public-private partnership with more than 300 members across the meetings industry, each screened for quality and performance. Participating companies receive support for overseas exhibitions, roadshows and conferences, while event planners and organizers that work with SMA member companies reap benefits if they obtain public assistance in attracting holding and promoting events. SMA members include hotels, convention centres, unique venues and shopping enterprises—including the grande dame of department stores, LOTTE DUTY FREE.

#### Contact

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## PLUS SEOUL

With customized business event experience through PLUS SEOUL, associations can achieve their goal of leaving a brand legacy in the city. The program, established in 2017, provides up to KRW 30,000,000 (about €23,300) in bidding support, KRW 20,000,000 (about €15,500) in promotional support, and KRW 200,000,000 (about €155,600) in hosting support. The best part? It's not a one-time event support program. Bidding and promotional support can be obtained once a year, up to two times for events with more than 50 international participants. And if you were hoping for a way to make your event really stand out, customized experiences like outdoor advertising and special tours across Seoul are all part of the PLUS SEOUL brand promise for congresses with at least 1,000 delegates.





World's leading the Business Event Destination

# JEJU

South Korea

# Jeju, South Korea's Accessible Wonder

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Jeju island, the largest one in South Korea, is confident that it can attract its visitors not only with its natural treasures, but also with its smart business city offerings.

*Words Vicky Koffa*

In Jeju, associations are invited to experience the winner of UNESCO's Triple Crown, the World Natural Heritage, the Island of World Peace, the Island of World Natural Conservation, the Island of Global Ecological Treasures and the World Environmental Capital – nothing less!

The best part, though, is the city's plans to complete local industry innovations which are based on the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution. In particular, one of its primary goals is to reach carbon-free status by 2030; to this end, rent-a-car centres equipped with electric vehicle charging stations and solar panels will be available. Through the Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems (C-ITS) Establishment Project, Jeju is establishing a smart grid infrastructure in order to facilitate the development of solar and wind power industry and unique underground water resources for a cleaner environment, growing the city into a block chain hub.

Additionally, there is strong focus on securing a foundation for nurturing IT, BT and other high-tech industries. Projects such as the Jeju

Science Park, the Jeju Venture Maru, the Jeju Lava Seawater General Industrial Complex and the Urban High-Tech Industrial Complex all showcase the advancements fostered in the city. For the next four years and by the year 2022, heavy investment from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MOLIT) will enhance twelve industrial sectors with the help of specialized educational institutions, such as the Innocity Industry-Academia Cooperation Cluster.

A main advantage deriving from these innovative projects is the close collaboration with the local communities. And, by developing products needed in business events utilizing Jeju's resources, and products in connection with the city renewal projects based on sustainable life zones, the meetings industry is contributing to the growth of the local economy.

As a result, conferences like the World Conservation Congress in 2002 with 10,000 participants from 180 nations, the 30th Photovoltaic Science and Engineering Conference (PVSEC-30) in 2020 and the 2019

International Seaweed Symposium (ISS) with over 1,000 participants each have chosen this all-encompassing destination.

Getting to the island couldn't actually be easier for them, as it is the only free international city in Korea which has a visa-free policy. Its international airport is quite busy daily serving direct flights to more than 43 cities, while plans for an expansion of the existing airport and the construction of a second airport in the east are already in place. Staying here is also effortless, since more than 40,000 hotel rooms cover all price ranges. Conferencing in the city is as smooth as ever too; the International Conference Centre (ICC JEJU), located in Jungmun Sightseeing Complex, Seogwipo City, offers over 4,300 persons capacity while a project to build a second Convention Centre by 2022 is being considered.

**More information**

[www.jejuvcvb.or.kr](http://www.jejuvcvb.or.kr)

