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Line in the Sand: Time to Take Action on Women in Business Events Leadership

Business Events Sydney (BESydney) and the world's largest association for business events strategists, PCMA, released the findings of a new global study into *Advancing Women in Business Events* in San Diego overnight.

During 2023, PCMA Foundation and Business Events Sydney (BESydney) set out to explore the pronounced gender gap in the global business events industry and then to recommend a set of actions the community can take to advance women into senior leadership roles, specifically to the C-suite and Boards, and address this inequity.

With a three-quarters majority female workforce globally, and a striking inverse male: female ratio as roles ascend to c-suite, CEO and Board levels, the Report identified the majority of the workforce currently¹:

- do not agree the industry's leadership is diverse
- could not see clear career pathways to leadership positions
- had insufficient access to career advancement support and development opportunities.

Barriers to advancement were identified across personal, organisational and societal levels.

BESydney CEO, Lyn Lewis-Smith said, *"This Report draws a clear line in the sand. BESydney has long been an advocate for gender parity in our industry. We cannot innovate, grow and build resilience as a sector unless we are tapping into the full capacity of our global workforce."*

"Whether it be gender, or ability, race, age, or any number of other factors, it is crucial that our sector challenge the prevailing status quo and embrace diversity in all its guises."

¹ Respondents to a November 2023 PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP global DEI survey conducted as part of this research project.

PCMA and CEMA President & CEO, Sherrif Karamat said, *“The business events industry is the ideal platform to demonstrate the value that women make every day, and we need to lead by example. Inclusivity and equity are not just the right thing to do, it leads to greater profitability, successful organizations, and a just society.”*

The global research project comprised four parts: in-person Think Tanks in Washington, San Francisco and online across the APAC region; a global DEI survey in conjunction with PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP out of the UK; 1:1 in depth interviews with female senior executives; and, secondary desk research.

The Findings Report in detail can be downloaded at [PCMA](#). The Findings will be followed by *Part 2: Recommended Actions for Change* to be released later this month.

- Ends -

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About Business Events Sydney (BESydney)

BESydney promotes Sydney as the pre-eminent Asia-Pacific business visitor destination and acquires strategic business events that deliver economic and social impact for Sydney, NSW and global communities. We are independent and not for profit, supported by the NSW Government, City of Sydney and industry.

About PCMA

PCMA, PCMA Foundation and CEMA are the world’s largest community for Business Events Strategists, providing senior-level education, networking, and market intelligence for the global business events industry. Their mission is to drive social and economic progress through business events. Headquartered in Chicago, IL PCMA has 17 North American Chapters, regional communities in APAC, EMEA and LATAM, and members in 59 countries. The Corporate Event Marketing Association (CEMA), a PCMA subsidiary, advances strategic event marketing and marketing communications for senior-level event marketers and industry professionals. www.pcma.org

About PCMA Foundation

The role of the PCMA Foundation is to support the Association’s mission through fundraising and grant-giving focused on scholarships, education and research that will advance the business events industry. Annually the Foundation funds over \$700K in impact, and since 1985 has funded over 2,500 scholarships, 100 research studies and education programs, and \$2.7M in charitable giving. www.foundation.pcma.org