

Thursday 13 August, 2026

World-leading RNA science meeting to debut in Sydney in 2028

Sydney has been selected to host the 33rd Annual Meeting of the RNA Society (RNA 2028), the world's preeminent gathering of RNA scientists, clinicians and industry innovators. The bid was driven by a committee of leading RNA scientists from Canberra and Sydney in partnership with Business Events Sydney (BESydney). The five-day meeting will be held at the International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) on Darling Harbour, marking the first time the Annual Meeting has been held in Australia.

The conference is expected to attract 1,200 delegates over five days and deliver an estimated \$5.1 million in direct expenditure to the local economy. RNA 2028 will showcase Australia's thriving RNA research community to the world.

BESydney Global Ambassador, John Mattick AO, SHARP Professor of RNA Biology at UNSW Sydney and bid leader said: "Securing this meeting for Sydney is a significant milestone for Australia's scientific community, reflecting the depth and importance of Australian RNA research. RNA biology and technology is at the forefront of advances in the understanding of genetic information, complex animal and plant traits and diseases, genetic engineering, and the development of new therapies."

Sydney's selection recognises the strength and scientific excellence of the city's RNA ecosystem. The meeting aligns strongly with significant NSW Government investment in RNA research and manufacturing and provides an important opportunity to showcase NSW as a global hub for RNA innovation and clinical translation. This includes the new \$96 million RNA Research and Manufacturing facility at Macquarie University, funded by the NSW Government, which has committed a further \$119 million over 10 years to RNA research and development projects.

Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology the Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong MP, who officially opened the RNA Research and Manufacturing Facility on 21 April this year, said: "The decision to award RNA 2028 to Sydney reflects the NSW Government's long-term investment in building a world-class RNA ecosystem.

"Hosting the world's leading researchers, clinicians and industry partners will put NSW on the global stage, showcasing the expertise and innovation that are driving breakthroughs in RNA medicine.

"This is an opportunity to attract investment, strengthen international partnerships and accelerate the development of new therapies that improve lives, while creating jobs and growing NSW's biotech sector."

NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer, Professor Hugh Durrant-Whyte, was a strong proponent for the conference alongside RNA Australia and Investment NSW: "This is a significant moment for RNA research and innovation in NSW and Australia, bringing the world's leading minds together with our own, just as NSW emerges as a global leader in RNA research and manufacturing.

"RNA is a building block to all precision medicine — targeted treatments tailored to individual patients — and could help solve some of our biggest health challenges. By investing in bodies like RNA Australia and building precincts where research, clinical translation and commercialisation come together in real time, we remove stagnation and make breakthroughs happen faster."

CEO of the RNA Society, Professor Kristian Baker PhD, said: "We are thrilled to invite our members and the broader RNA scientific community to Sydney in 2028, one of the world's most vibrant and beautiful cities. As the first RNA Society Annual Meeting ever to be held in Australia, RNA 2028 will showcase the nation's thriving RNA research ecosystem while fostering scientific exchange, collaboration and partnerships among our international colleagues, connections that will drive the next generation of advances in RNA biology and therapeutics."

BESydney CEO Amanda Lampe said the win reflected the strength of Sydney's research ecosystem and the city's ability to attract the world's most influential scientific gatherings. "Winning RNA 2028 is a powerful endorsement of Sydney's standing as a global centre for RNA science," Ms Lampe said.

"Business events like this do far more than fill hotel rooms, they connect our researchers with the best in the world, attract investment, and accelerate the discoveries that will shape the future of healthcare. We're proud to have worked alongside our Global Ambassadors, government and industry partners to bring this prestigious meeting to Sydney for the very first time."

Sally Cope, Executive General Manager, Industry & Business Events at Tourism Australia said supporting BESydney's successful bid to host RNA 2028 presented a huge opportunity for the Australian science community.

"Since its inception Tourism Australia's Business Events Bid Fund Program has supported a thriving visitor economy by building a strong pipeline of international business events across Australia. Securing this win will spotlight Australia's world-class research and biotech capability on the global stage, reinforcing our growing reputation as a hub for health and life sciences innovation," Ms Cope said.

The conference was also supported by Placemaking NSW and Destination NSW.

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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.