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From dementia detection to language preservation: global speech specialists gather in Sydney

From detecting early signs of dementia through subtle speech changes to preserving Indigenous and under-represented languages using artificial intelligence, Interspeech 2026 brings researchers, scientists, engineers and linguists together at the International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney from 27 September to 1 October.

Interspeech is the world's largest and most comprehensive conference on the science and technology of spoken language processing.

New South Wales' concentration of speech, hearing and neuroscience expertise helped secure the conference, with organisations including Cochlear, the Australian Hearing Hub and the MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development recognised internationally for their contributions to speech and language research.

UNSW Associate Professor Beena Ahmed's research into the subtle changes in speech that can signal neurological decline highlights the real-world impact of advances in speech science. Interspeech 2026 brings together leading researchers and industry experts to explore how these innovations can improve health outcomes and support future technologies.

"The research being discussed at Interspeech 2026 has the potential to improve lives in profound ways. Interspeech 2026 provides a unique opportunity for researchers, clinicians and technology leaders from around the world to share knowledge, challenge assumptions and advance innovations that can benefit communities globally."

The conference will also explore how advances in speech technology can help preserve First Nations and Pacific languages, making it possible to develop language tools with far less recorded data than was previously required.

Researchers believe these advances could help protect languages at risk of being lost while creating more inclusive technologies that work across a broader range of voices and communities.

Interspeech 2026 was secured for Sydney by Business Events Sydney in partnership with the Australasian Speech Science and Technology Association and the Tourism Australia Bid Fund program. Beyond its research program, the conference is expected to attract more than 1,200 delegates and generate an estimated \$5 million in direct expenditure for the local economy.

Business Events Sydney CEO, Amanda Lampe, said conferences like Interspeech have the potential to transform our way of life. "Securing Interspeech 2026 is a powerful endorsement of Sydney's expertise across speech science, health technology, hearing research and language innovation.

"Interspeech demonstrates how business events accelerate the exchange of knowledge that can improve lives, whether that's supporting earlier detection of neurological conditions or helping communities preserve languages for future generations."

ICC Sydney Chief Executive Officer, Adam Mather-Brown, said Interspeech 2026 demonstrates the far-reaching value of Sydney's international business events sector.

"Welcoming the world's leading speech and language specialists to ICC Sydney strengthens the NSW visitor economy while creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, collaboration and innovation. Our experienced team, world class services and connected city location provide the support and environment international organisers need to deliver an exceptional event."

For more information on the program, visit the INTERSPEECH 2026 website: [Interspeech 2026 - Interspeech 2026](#).

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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.