

Comprehensive service

Amsterdam Convention Board represents over 100 suppliers and the comprehensive website contains all their details as well as online request-for-proposal and venue-finder links. The board also offers promotional documentation and support by way of co-ordination of made-to-measure programmes, assistance in the compilation of bid books and assistance in site inspections.



A popular place – the EASD exhibition

Feeding the 15,000

AMSTERDAM RAI CONVENTION CENTRE HOSTED LAST YEAR'S ANNUAL EASD MEETING, ITS LARGEST SO FAR

Not many European convention centres can host nearly 15,000 delegates but Amsterdam RAI ticked all the boxes for the 43rd annual meeting of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes, September 17-21. The delegates were from six continents and 122 countries altogether. “Flexibility in both service and infrastructure are the main requisites to realise such a large event,” says Bas Schot, senior project manager at PCO Eurocongress International, selected to assist with the logistical organisation. “The RAI is very flexible, offers very professional in-house services and works with first-class external suppliers. Among the other sub-contractors were Gielissen Interiors and Exhibitions, ACS audiovisual company and the RAI Hotel and Travel Service.”

The location of the RAI, between the airport and the city centre, is another plus for the venue. Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport is well known as a hub for many international flights and the city's efficient infrastructure and large hotel capacity were further important factors in the choice of the destination. There was also tremendous collaboration between the Netherlands Board of Tourism & Conventions (NBTC), the ATCB and the centre itself to secure

the event and ensure its success.

As for feeding such a large number, lunchboxes were provided by RAI Catering. “It was an immense job because each day 7,500 to 11,000 delegates had to collect these boxes at two fixed points near the poster area within a two-hour time frame,” Schot explains. “In addition, RAI Catering had to deal with individual sponsor requests on the first day, varying from 250 to 1,500 guests per order.”

Social functions included a welcome reception and farewell party at the RAI, the President's dinner at the Old Church, Renaissance Hotel Amsterdam, ‘Museum Night’ at five of Amsterdam's well know museums, a ballet evening at Het Muziektheater and a party at the lively discotheque Odeon in the

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CITYFILE

Airport ↑

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol. Transfers to the city centre take about 30 minutes by road and 15 minutes by train.

Accommodation

Amsterdam has at least 63 three-, four- and five-star hotels.

Infrastructure

By 2015, the metro, which currently circles Amsterdam, will go straight through, extending south of the RAI to a new business area and continuing north, under the river IJ, to the regenerated Eastern Harbour area.

Key venue

Amsterdam RAI seats up to 12,900 in its largest hall and has 87,000 sqm. of exhibition space. A new 10-storey building, Elicium, under construction in the Congresplein square, will connect the two existing buildings and give extra flexibility for large, multi-day events. Elicium should be ready for use next January.

📍 www.rai.nl

city centre. Delegates were also given lists of some of Amsterdam's best and trendiest restaurants for their own enjoyment. "We were really pleased that EASD chose Amsterdam for the convention," says ACB director Marc Horsmans. "The city was absolutely bustling with activity."

Afterwards, the EASD board and Dr Viktor Jörgens, executive director EFSD/EASD at the secretariat in Düsseldorf, said it was their best conference ever.

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— Bas Schot



The RAI's new Elicium takes shape



A private viewing of Rembrandt's 'Night Watch' in the Rijksmuseum

LAST YEAR, THE NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES IN AMSTERDAM INCREASED BY 22 PER CENT AND THE CITY IS PROUD OF ITS REPUTATION AS A WORLD-CLASS CONGRESS DESTINATION

SPOTLIGHT

Amsterdam – where art meets efficiency

Amsterdam has always celebrated its status as a cultural capital, so much so that next year it will be dubbed 'Amsterdam Art City' to pay tribute to its museological marvels, many of which are must-sees for visiting conference delegates.

The inspiration for the artistic theme year is the opening of the Hermitage Amsterdam, as a significant annex to the original in St Petersburg, and the renovated Stedelijk Museum, which has one of the world's best collections of modern art and design. The Royal Palace will also reopen next year with an exhibition on architect Scamozzi.

Other landmarks include the famous Rijksmuseum, with its collection of paintings by Vermeer, Frans Hals and Rembrandt, the Van Gogh Museum, Koninklijk Concertgebouw, De Nederlandse Opera and many more stunning historic and modern buildings.

Award-winning hotels

Other cities may be building the world's largest or most lavish hotels but Amsterdam still competes with properties that suit its style and character. The Hotel Pulitzer has been voted second best hotel in Europe. One of Starwood's Luxury Collection, it comprises 25 canal houses offering 230 rooms and has an art gallery, garden, cocktail bar and a boat moored in front.

The 20-storey, 408-room Mövenpick Hotel City Centre, which combines with the new passenger ship terminal and Music Building on the river IJ to form Amsterdam's second largest

conference complex, and the Grand Hotel Amrâth, which opened last year in the former Scheepvaarthuis (shipping house), are both now on the Expedia Insiders' Select list.

The Amsterdam American Hotel won this year's Dutch Hotel award. A listed, historical monument looking over the Singel canal, it has renovated three of its meeting rooms in Art Deco style. They have a maximum capacity of 100, 80 and 50 or can be combined to create one large room.

'Next year Amsterdam will be dubbed Amsterdam Art City to pay tribute to its museological marvels.'

Congresses in the Netherlands

For information about the NBTC and holding a conference anywhere in the Netherlands, visit www.holland.com/meetings