

CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE

ICCA Central European
Chapter Meeting 2026



Preliminary Programme

ICCA-CEC PRE-PROGRAMME

Sunday, 6 September 2026

14:30 – 16:30 Discover Ljubljana
Guided City Tours

17:00 – 18:00 Track A: City Hotel

**Networking: Networking Session for
ICCA First Timers**

Facilitated by **Efi Koudeli (ICCA)**

Track B: City Hotel

Networking: ICCA Business Exchange
Regional networking, knowledge
exchange and new business
opportunities.

Facilitated by **Marina Knittel (ICCA-CEC)**

WELCOME RECEPTION AND OPENING NIGHT

Sunday, 6 September 2026

Venue: Center Rog

19:00 – 22:00 Join fellow delegates for the official opening of ICCA CEC 2026. An evening of networking, celebration and the first spark of the Unicorn Awards, set in one of Ljubljana's most inspiring creative venues.

CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE – DAY 1

MONDAY, 7 September 2026

Venue: Cankarjev dom Ljubljana

07:00 – 08:00 Activation: Morning in Ljubljana's Green Heart
Start your day with a refreshing walk through Tivoli Park, Ljubljana's green heart

08:30 – 09:00 Coffee & Networking

09:00 – 09:10 Welcome Session: A New Perspective Begins - Welcome to ICCA-CEC

Chapter Chair: **Marina Knittel**

Chapter Co-Chair: **Magdalena Holowinska**

09:10 – 09:25 Opening Ceremony: Connecting Perspectives

Senthil Gopinath, Chief Executive Officer, ICCA
Maja Pak Olaj, Slovenian Tourist Board
Petra Stušek, CEO at Ljubljana Tourism

Moderated by Patrick Delaney

09:25 – 10:00 Panel: Changing Perspectives: Leading Through Transformation

Senthil Gopinath, Chief Executive Officer, ICCA
Petra Stušek, CEO at Ljubljana Tourism
Fredri Fontanot, CEO at Slovenian Convention Bureau
TBD

Moderated by Patrick Delaney

10:00 – 10:15 ICCA Update: The Road Ahead

Efi Koudeli, Senior Regional Director Europe

10:15 – 10:40 Keynote: How Creativity Makes Events Matter

Aris Theophilakis, NOSLEEPTILLBROOKLYN

10:40 – 11:00 Networking Break

11:00 – 11:40 Active Panel: What PCOs and Event Agencies Can Learn from Each Other

What can PCOs and event agencies learn from each other?

Panelists:

Ori Lahav, Kenes
Sissi Lignou, AFEA Congress
Alexandre Meyrieux, KIT Group
TBD

Moderated by Gorazd Čad

11:40 – 11:50 Market Insight: Connectivity Alone Is Not a Strategy

Why air access is only one part of destination competitiveness by Kongres Magazine

11:50 – 12:20 Round table: Aviation Reality Check

Mateusz Dziudziel, LOT
Jürgen Deischl, Fraport Slovenija
Boško RupiĆ, Air Serbia
Johannes Müller, Lufthansa Group

Moderated by ICCA Aviation Council

12:20– 12:30 Market Insight: What Guests Really Remember?

Hidden insights from hotels and convention centres by Kongres Magazine

12:30 – 13:00 Round table: Are Venues Ready for What's Next?

TBD, Cankarjev dom
Iztok Bricl, GR
Sven Bossu, AIPC – The International Association of Convention Centres
TBD, Austria Center Vienna
TBD, Krakow Convention Centre

Moderated by Magdalena Holowinska

13:00 – 13:05 A short welcome from Cankarjev dom

13:05 – 14:00 Networking Lunch in the Park

14:00 – 14:15 Activation: Change Your Perspective – Interactive Energiser

14:20 – 15:00 Track A: Club CD Hall

Workshop: Building Bridges: The Power of Ambassador Programmes

Moderated by **Gerald Howard**,
Lausanne Montreux Congress

Track B: Alma Karlin Hall

Fishbowl: Artificial Intelligence: Cutting Through the Noise

Stefan Bonsels, Head of Convention
Bureau Basel
Oliver Wykes, COO of WindEurope and
AC Forum President

Moderated by **Alexandre Meyrieux**, KIT
Group

15:00 – 15:20 Networking Break

15:20 – 16:05 Track A: Club CD Hall
Campfire Sessions: Changing Perspectives

Moderated by **Ivo Franschitz**, Enited

Track B: Alma Karlin Hall
Competition: Next Gen Challenge

Moderated by **Ana Robič Zima**,
Slovenian Convention Bureau

Guest: **Christoph Tessmar**, Barcelona
CVB

16:05 – 16:45 Keynote: Designing Emotions: The Most Powerful Lever for Behavior Change and Impact

Pigalle Tavakkoli, School of Experience Design

16:45 – 17:00 Closing Session: Reflections and Closing of Day 1

Moderated by **Marina Knitel** and **Magdalena Holowinska**

17:00 – 17:45 Site Inspection: Cankarjev dom – CD Congress Centre Ljubljana

A NIGHT IN THE CITY MUSEUM

Monday, 7 September 2026

Venue: City Museum

19:30 – 22:00 Step into the historic City Museum for an evening of meaningful connections, local flavours, and relaxed networking. Celebrate the spirit of ICCA CEC while discovering the stories and heritage of Ljubljana.

CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE – DAY 2

TUESDAY, 8 September 2026

Venue: GR Ljubljana - Congress & Convention Centre

08:30 – 9:00 Coffee & Networking

09:00 – 09:05 Welcome from GR Ljubljana - Congress & Convention Centre

Anja Mijatovič, GR Ljubljana

09:05 – 09:15 Start the day together: ICCA-CEC BINGO

The Start of the day

Moderated by: Marina Knittel and Magdalena Holowinska

09:15 - 09:40 Keynote: Creating Moments the World Remembers

Maria Laura IASCONI, Olympic and Paralympic Ceremonies Director - Milano Cortina 2026

09:40 – 10:00 Student Challenge: Winning Team Presentation

Moderator: TBD

10:00 – 10:15 ICCA Fire Talks: ICCA CEC Member Spotlight

Four 3-minute lightning updates from ICCA CEC members – sharing new initiatives, success stories and opportunities. First come, first served.

Fire talk 1: Leopold Korytkowski, Szczecin Convention Bureau

Fire talk 2: TBD

Fire talk 3: TBD

Fire talk 4: TBD

10:15 – 10:45 Networking break

10:45 – 11:45 Workshop: Association Perspectives & Smarter Bidding – Building Stronger Partnerships Between Associations and Destinations

Anouk Buergisser Marti
Denis Schultz

Moderated by TBD

11:45 – 12:15 Keynote: Staying Human in the Age of AI

Dan Podjed, anthropologist & associate profesor

12:15 – 12:30 Closing Session: The Journey Continues

- Conference reflections & key takeaways
- Recognition of hosts and partners
- Announcement of the next ICCA CEC host destination

Moderated by: Marina Knittel and Magdalena Holowinska

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch in a park

13:30 – 14:00 Site Inspection: GR Ljubljana - Congress & Convention Centre

13:45 – 14:00 Transfer to Ljubljana Castle to continue with the Unicorn Events Afternoon Programme

DO YOU BELIEVE IN UNICORNS? - Change Your Perspective Again

TUESDAY, 8 September 2026

Venue: Ljubljana Castle

14:20 – 14:40 CENTRE STAGE: OPENING CEREMONY OF MILANO CORTINA

Fire Talk 4: TBD

14:40– 15:00 CENTRE STAGE: CLOSING CEREMONY OF MILANO CORTINA

Fire Talk 5: Adriano Martella, Filmmaster

15:00 – 15:15 OLYMPIC F*CK-UPS: The Things We Got Wrong

15:15 – 15:30 Networking Break

15:30 – 16:15 FESTIVAL FOUNDERS FORUM – FROM FESTIVAL TO MOVEMENT

Lessons from the Region's Biggest Live Platforms: TBD

16:15 – 16:40 JOKER OUT: Behind the Scenes of a Historic Event

A television-style conversation with the core team behind the Joker Out event, exploring the concept, execution and crisis management of one of the most talked-about projects of the year.

16:40 - 17:00 CENTRE STAGE: HOW CREATIVITY MAKES EVENTS MATTER

Fire Talk 6: TBD

17:00 – 17:15 THE UNICORN MANIFESTO

What Should Never Change in Live Events?

A fast-paced closing session bringing together the day's key speakers for one final reflection on the future of live events.

UNICORN AWARDS WINNERS CEREMONY: A Castle Night of Celebration

Tuesday, 8 September 2026

Venue: Ljubljana Castle

20:00 – 23:00 Celebrate the pinnacle of the Unicorn Awards at Ljubljana Castle, where innovation, excellence, and inspiration take centre stage. Join us for an unforgettable evening of recognition, celebration, and panoramic views over the city.

