

AIPC Academy launched in Brussels



The Brussels Market Square, Grote Markt

After more than a year of planning, industry research and logistical organisation, AIPC (the International Association of Congress Centres) will be launching the AIPC Academy in Brussels in February.

The Academy is a comprehensive industry professional education programme designed to utilise the experience and expertise of industry leaders to respond to a growing need to upgrade and broaden the professional qualifications of congress centre staff.

"Our member surveys have indicated for some time a growing concern

on a shortage of fully qualified staff in many areas of their operations", said AIPC President, Barbara Maple. "In particular, we are seeing many new entrants into the industry who may have their own specific qualifications but who lack the broader understanding of how the industry operates. The purpose of the Academy is to provide a broad industry perspective which will both help staff to perform better in their current positions and prepare them for taking on broader responsibilities in their respective organisations."

Course content focuses specifically on topics that are unique to the management of congress centres,

including areas such as industry finance and administration, sales and marketing, corporate relations and facility operations. The faculty is made up of experienced senior facility managers and other industry leaders who each have extensive and varied expertise in their respective fields. The program will be highly interactive in order to take full advantage of the different knowledge and experience that both faculty and participants will bring.

"We were not interested in replicating programs that offer general business or management skills, as these are readily available in most communities," said Maple.

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**- Barbara Maple,
AIPC President**

"What we have done instead is design a program that deals directly and exclusively with management in the congress centre environment, which is our area of expertise and a context that students will not be able to get anywhere else."

With a faculty of eight instructors, the initial Academy program will be delivered as a "pilot" version in order to refine program content and presentations. A full complement of 25 students are already registered for this year's program, and both students and faculty will be expected to participate fully in course development by critiquing each topic area in an effort to help shape the ongoing program.

The complete program outline and faculty information are available on http://www.aipc.org/en/trai_aca.htm Events