

## MANIFEST: RECLAIMING FACE-TO-FACE EVENTS, TOGETHER

The Events Industry moves a large amount of wealth within Catalonia's economy. The professionalism and competitiveness of all the participating actors consistently places Barcelona among the top 4 most attractive world cities for International Congresses. According to data from the Barcelona Tourism Convention Bureau, the economic impact of the meetings and congresses held in Barcelona in 2019 amounted to 1,761.68 million euros. It is important to note that this fiscal data does not include the financial impact generated by Trade Fairs nor the Events carried out by companies throughout Catalonia that are neither meetings nor congresses, such as inaugurations, marketing campaigns, product presentations, company anniversaries, team buildings, trainings, etc.

Being invisible is a principle of excellence in the Events Industry: not seeing all the preparation and companies involved indicates that the Event is a success. This principle of inconspicuousness results in our industry going unnoticed as a sector:

- There is no economic data aggregated by the Events Industry.
- The trades and companies that make up the Events Sector are unseen. Thousands of companies and freelancers are dedicated, directly or indirectly, to Events in Catalonia under very different economic headings.

All companies and freelancers in the Events Industry stopped working before the U.N. decreed the State of Pandemic. Most of us began to suffer cancellations as soon as January 2020. Keeping a company alive that hardly invoices for 12 months is a titanic effort. Not knowing when the activity will be able to recover with a certain degree of normalcy is agonizing. Some companies have already gone out of business.

We need to reactivate the industry to maintain the wealth it generates and the jobs it provides, to perpetuate the business created through professional interaction at these events, as well as to preserve the transmission of key knowledge that takes place at congresses. Last, but not least, to uphold the competitiveness gained over decades of professionalization and specialization in the industry.

For this reason, the private sector Event Companies, hand in hand with the public-private entities Fira de Barcelona and the Barcelona Convention Bureau, with the support of the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, take the initiative to present the:

### **EVENTS INDUSTRY RECOVERY PLAN BY IMPLEMENTATION OF RAPID ANTIGEN TESTS** Based on:

- The recognition by the Department of Health of Rapid Antigen Test as a valid and complementary tool to those sector plans already approved by the Events.
- The definition by the Department of Health of what information it requires from the organizers regarding the performance and results of the potential Rapid Antigen Tests implemented at all events.

**The reactivation of face-to-face events, following the recommendations of the Recovery Plan, will have a doubly positive impact on society. It will revive the economy of the events industry (Fairs, Congresses, Corporate Meetings, etc.), it will increase the number of people tested, which in turn will cut the chains of contagion at an early stage and provide data to the health system for monitoring.**