



Melbourne Connect
**Innovation
Week**

Melbourne Connect Innovation Week Briefing 2026

Festival dates: 7 - 11 September 2026

This briefing will be recorded

Introduction

Melbourne Connect Innovation Week is Melbourne Connect's annual flagship festival.

Innovation Week brings together research, industry and students to solve the great challenges.

The week celebrates the innovation ecosystem and the ways in which organisations and institutions leverage research and emerging technologies to disrupt and transform our society.

Innovation Week showcases our collective convening power and is **a demonstration of the intellectual and physical outputs of the University and its partners.**



Overview

Melbourne Connect Innovation Week will be held from **Monday 7 – Friday 11 September 2026**.

The festival is centered in venues across Melbourne Connect but **we welcome programming in venues across The University of Melbourne (and beyond)**.

The week hosts 40+ activities – from orations, pitches and panels to workshops, exhibitions and industry fairs.

The only limit is our creativity.



Goals

The goals of *Innovation Week* are to:

- Promote participating partners.
- Showcase innovation outputs and impacts (ideas, research, tech, social benefit, etc).
- Demonstrate our convening power.



How did we measure success in 2025?

- 42 activities
- 35+ partners
- 5000 registrations (4937 actually)
- 3000 attendances (2969 actually)
- **1750+** leads created for partners
- 500,000 total social media impressions
- 7250 engagements via paid advertising
- 60,000+ webpage views



What did the survey tell us?

- 40% of attendees went to 2+ events
- 54% female audience
- 75% were aged 15–44
- 47% were students
- Net Promoter Score of 53
- Attendees gave the event a rating 4.53 (out of 5)



Why get involved?

- No venue or AV costs! (For events held at MC!)
- Leverage extensive mar comms efforts & spend.
- Events in Forum and Launchpad filmed & streamed.
- Professional AV and Venue assistance.
- Registration managed for you – all data shared.
- **Grow your audience!** Strength in numbers.
- **Collaborate & connect** with colleagues & partners.



What do I need to do?

- Start thinking about your event idea now!
 - Great, lively, high-value speakers
 - Interactive event formats
 - Engaging your audiences
- Bring your base!
 - Market your event
 - Manage your speakers
 - Need a key contact, continuity



Highlights of 2025

Student Focused:

- Internship Showcase
- Research Showcase

Future Focussed

- Quantum Jobs Fair
- Next Gen AI Conference

Themed Streams

- AI
- Med-tech
- Climate

Interactive Activations

- Cricket Song
- Interactive Robots
- QRious Bodies

Growing, Global Presence

World-Class Development Centers & Research Partners



- 200+ employees
- 30 Government Agency Customers
- 120+ Ph.D. Physicists & Engineers on Staff
- 2007 ColdQuanta Founded
- Fortune 500 Customers
- Revenue Generating



The slide features a central graphic of a globe with a network of glowing blue lines connecting various points. The globe is partially obscured by the speaker in the foreground. The text and graphics are arranged in a clean, modern layout.



What do we want to see in 2026?

- Interesting **provocations** ... and novel solutions
- Amazing **keynote** speakers
- Researchers and industry talking about the **future**
- Students making **connections**
- Showcases of **cutting-edge** tech
- Formats that excite audiences (and **achieve goals**)
- No blatant product pitches – your **leadership, values** and ideas sell your product
- No super niche topics



SWOT on 2025

STRENGTHS

- Student events to open & close festival
- Theme days (Entrepreneurship & AI days)
- Activations
- Involvement with key partners

WEAKNESSES

- Last-minute programming
- Med-tech
- Badly organised events

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continued focus on student events
- Early connections with key partners
- Innovation Week Oration
- Incentivise partners to follow the rules!



Key Changes for 2026

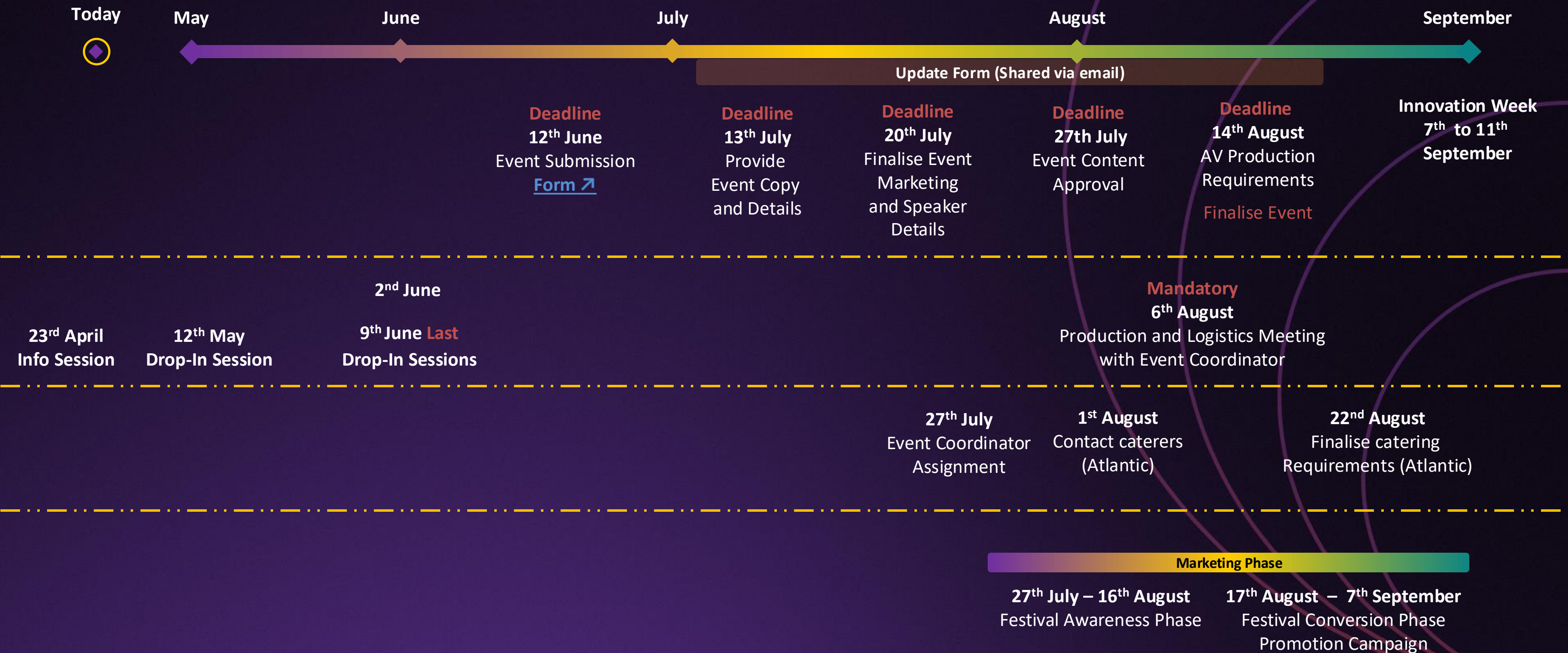
- Growing numbers mean even **less niche topics** (However – we still have rooms to fit all sizes!)
- Greater effort to **group events by theme**: Entrepreneurship; Health Futures; Civil Society – Sustainability, Democracy, Indigenous Knowledges; Transformative Technology; & Industry Engagement. (These will be confirmed once all ideas submitted.)
- More **curatorial input & certainty**
- **Entrepreneurship Day** on Weds 11 Sept
- **Signature events** in the Forum



Festival tagline remains:

Redefine the future

Key Dates and Timeline:



Key people

Steve & Sharon – Project management

Lynnette & Stephanie – Marketing & Comms

Mark – AV & Production

Camilla – Activations on the Superfloor

Concierge Team – Volunteers

Sam & Megan (Atlantic Group) - Catering



What should I do next?

- Talk to us! We're very happy to meet 1:1
- Drop-in Sessions on Tuesdays – 12 May, 2 June & 9 June
- **Submit your final event/activity by Fri 12 June**
- Check the website: [MCIW2026 website](#)

Questions?



Thank You

