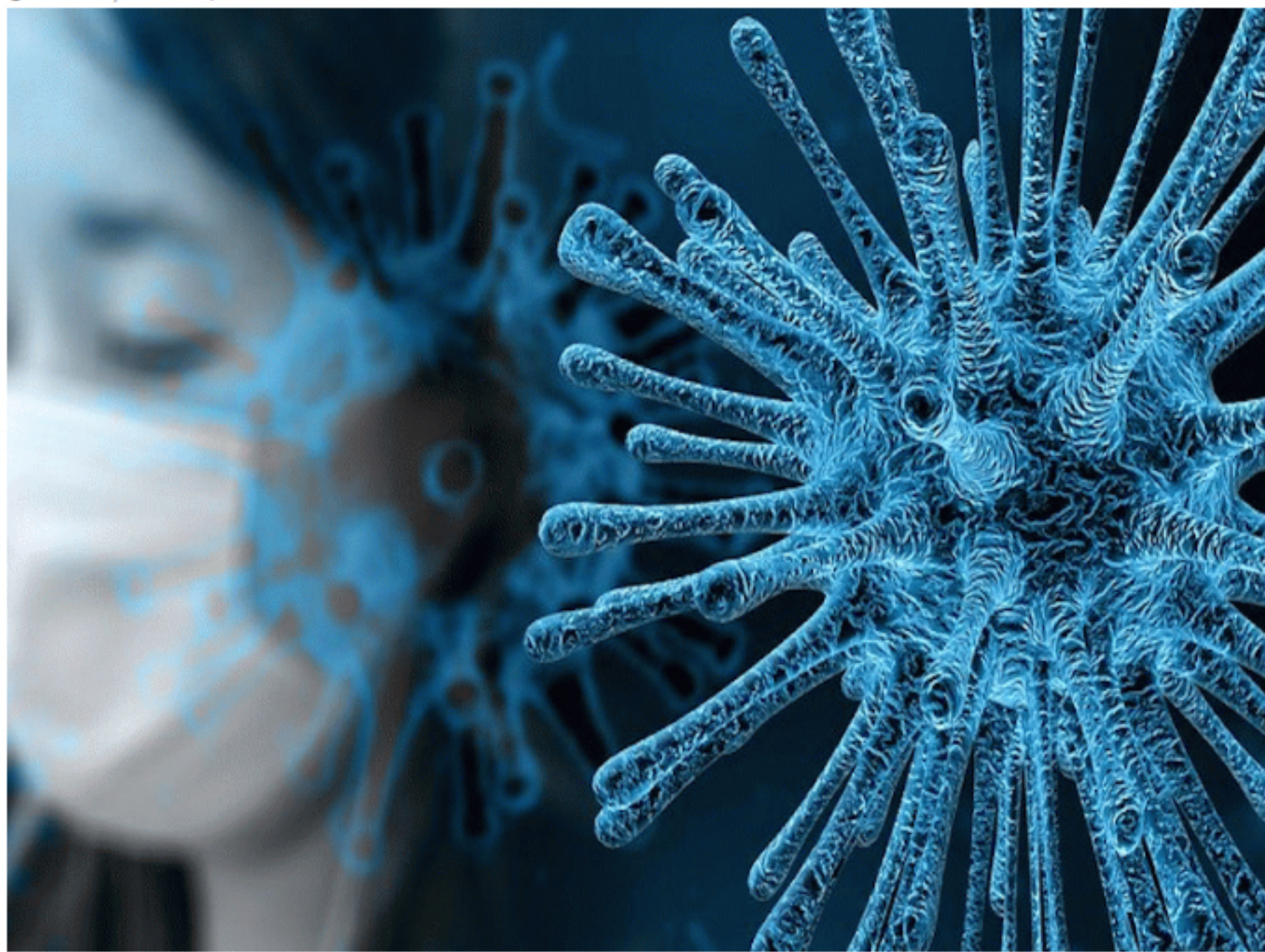


The Impacts of Coronavirus on the Meetings Industry

12th Feb, 2020 News



The Coronavirus epidemic, 2019-nCov, has grown a lot as the number of cases confirmed in the laboratory in the last weeks, reaching 43,118 cases and 1,016 deaths at the time of writing (February 11). Beyond the numerous hoaxes circulating through social and traditional media, the main fear regards how one may get infected.

A good and informative Q&A can be found [here](#).

While researchers from all over the world are working hard to provide the best responses, travellers returning from Asian countries and destinations are being advised to avoid contact with other people if they show certain symptoms.

The list for Public Health England includes China, Thailand, Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea. Holiday companies and airlines are still taking people to these countries, while insurers say travel policies are unlikely to cover cancellations - except to China. The BBC explains what are your travel rights [here](#).

How is the outbreak already affecting the meeting industry?

Recently, HQ's Chinese managing director Vivian Xu had to cancel her attendance to AIME. Due to her history of travelling to China at the end of last year and her nationality, she faced the risk of being refused to enter Australia. Indeed, [here](#) is the official announcement from the Australian government.

According to the world's largest network of business events strategists, PCMA, "the Coronavirus continues to roil global travel and trade, event strategists are delaying, canceling, or soldiering on with their plans". They created a dedicated [web page](#) to help event professionals find reliable information and ensure they are prepared.

The future course of the outbreak is not clear, however it is predicted to last until the end of April.

Since there are currently no vaccines against coronaviruses, prevention is very important. As for face masks, they help prevent further spread of infection from those who are sick to others around them - but do not seem to be as effective in protecting those who are not infected.

Hand washing and disinfection is the key. HQ invites their readers, especially those travelling a lot, to wash their hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

HQ recommends events organisers to pay special attention to the hygiene issue when planning their next event - by providing sanitisers and a good ventilation system, for instance. Alternatively to in person meetings, online conference calls are a proper choice.

This list from PCMA contain updates on the status of some events:

- The **Singapore Airshow 2020**, scheduled for Feb. 11-16 at the Changi Exhibition Centre (CEC), will go on as planned. **Experia Events**, organizer of the biennial air show — Asia's largest aerospace and defense event — said in a statement that "enhanced precautionary measures" would be in place to safeguard attendees' well-being and safety. **The Straits Times** reported that those measures included temperature screening at access points at CEC and Singapore Expo. Experia and various media also reported that some exhibitors and acts have pulled out of the event and that a related aviation conference, which draws 300 government officials, civil aviation authorities, airport operators, and airline executives, has been canceled;
- **IT&CM China and CTW China**, two MICE industry trade shows, have moved from March 24-26 to August 3-5. The co-located events will still be held at the Shanghai Convention & Exhibition Center of International Sourcing, event organizers TTG and CITS MICE said in a **statement**, which noted that the new dates hinge on the virus being under control;
- The **International Exhibition Logistics Association** (IELA) postponed its Operations Summit 2020, planned for Feb. 13-15 at Bangkok's Mövenpick Hotel Sukhumvit, to later this year, according to an email sent to speakers and delegates by IELA Chairman Vicki Bedi. The biennial event was last held in 2018, drawing 61 delegates from 27 countries. IELA, which is based in Switzerland, provides a forum for people and companies involved in the international transportation of exhibition material;
- The **National Association of Travel Agents Singapore** (NATAS) has rescheduled its conference, originally planned for Feb. 21-23, Singapore's **The New Paper** reports. The consumer travel fair will now be held May 1-3 at Singapore EXPO. NATAS hosts two events a year, the travel fair in February/March and a holidays fair in August/September. Each event draws about 100,000 people, according to NATAS' website;
- Credit Suisse Group AG's annual Asia investment conference — scheduled for March 25-27 in Hong Kong — has been canceled, **Bloomberg** reports;
- **TCT Asia**, an additive manufacturing event planned for Feb. 19-21 in Shanghai, has been postponed, with a new date expected to be announced soon, organizers announced on the TCT website;
- The NYU School of Professional Studies (NYUPS) has postponed its inaugural **NYU Hospitality and Real Estate Investment Conference** at NYU Shanghai, moving the event from April 2020 to April 2021, the school said in a statement on its website. It added that the 2021 date was dependent upon the coronavirus outbreak being under control. The event, which builds upon the success NYUPS has had at its conferences in New York, is aimed at developing industry leaders in China;
- **ISPO Beijing**, a sports exhibition scheduled for Feb. 12-15 at NCIEC Beijing, has been canceled, according to a statement on the ISPO website. The event, organized by Messe München, moves to Jan. 14-16, 2021;
- Health-care industry event **CAREhab 2020**, planned for 14-15 at MAX Atria at Singapore Expo will move to July 10-11;
- The **R+T Asia 2020** event planned for Feb. 24-26 in Shanghai, will move to June, according to the **m+a UFI Exhibition Newsletter**. The event, held at Shanghai New International Expo Center for the sun-shading and door-gate sectors, annually draws about 40,000 attendees and about 650 exhibitors;
- The **SPS Industrial Automation Fair Guangzhou** (SIAF) and the concurrent Asiamold fairs, both of which are organized by Messe Frankfurt, are canceled, according to a statement on the SIAF website. Both were to take place Feb. 26-28 at the China Import and Export Fair Complex in Guangzhou and are expected to be rescheduled;
- Citibank's annual Asia Pacific Investor Conference scheduled for Feb. 19-20 in Singapore has been canceled, **CAN** reported. The event, which has not yet been rescheduled, is one of Citibank's largest annual conferences, according to CAN, with more than 1,000 institutional investors, issuers and C-suite financial professionals attending.


We are also aware that the team of [ITB China](#), set to take place at the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention Center from the 13th to the 15th of May, is closely monitoring the situation and will keep attendees up to date with any upcoming developments.


Disclaimer: original reporting by HQ.

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