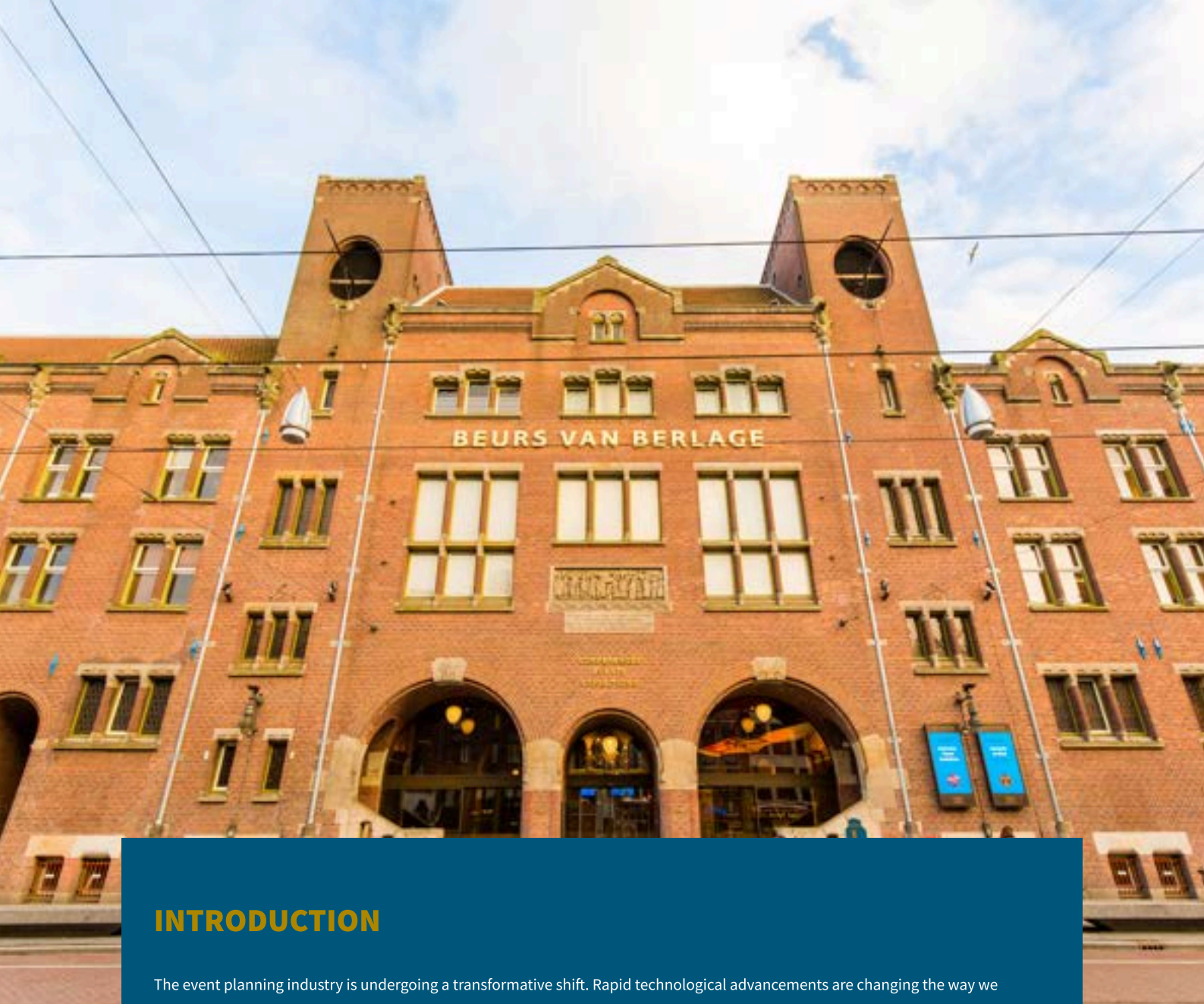




Whitepaper

# The Future of Event Planning – **7 trends** we cannot ignore

Amsterdam Conference Centre  
**BEURS VAN BERLAGE**



## INTRODUCTION

The event planning industry is undergoing a transformative shift. Rapid technological advancements are changing the way we organise and experience events. From artificial intelligence (AI) to augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), the integration of cutting-edge technologies brings us endless possibilities on how to interact with attendees and to enhance personal engagement during in-person meetings..

However, there is more than just technology that influences the evolution in event planning. Non-technological trends, particularly in the realms of inclusiveness and sustainability, are becoming equally pivotal. Today's attendees and stakeholders seek experiences that not only inspire and engage, but also resonate with their ethical standards.

These technological and non-technological trends predict a steep development in the world of event planning, promising enhanced event experiences and outcomes for both attendees and hosts. But they also set new standards. So, how can we conceptualise, organise, and execute events that live up to these standards? This whitepaper explores which trends to keep up with, for those who want to organise future-proof events that will impress every attendee.

# 1

## BROADCASTING EVENTS

At the Beurs van Berlage, your event can reach far beyond the venue. With advanced broadcast solutions, we offer the possibility to extend in-person events to online recordings through flawless production, streaming, and recording. Combined with the unique atmosphere of our historic building, every presentation is captured with impact and character.

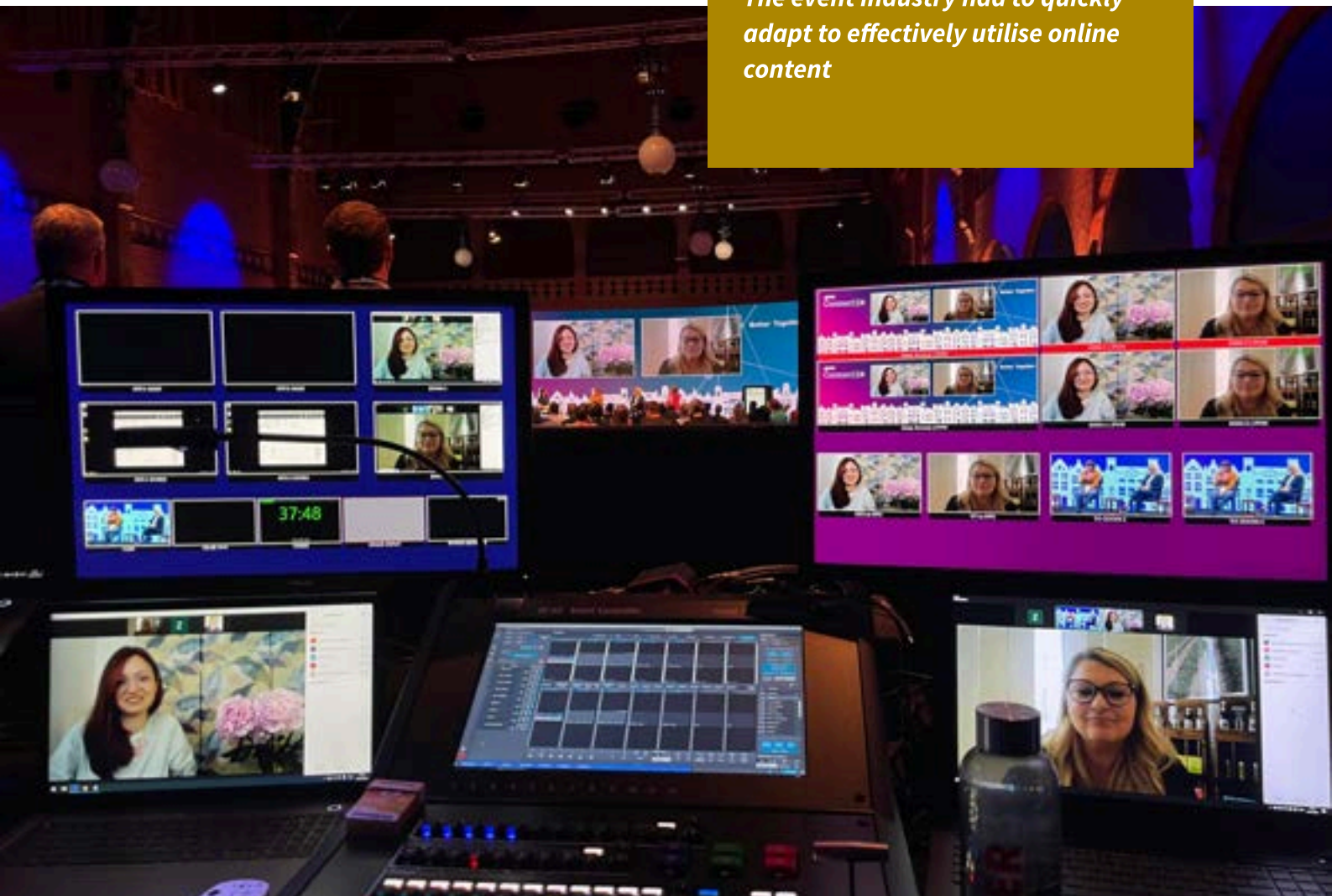
### Advantages of broadcasting events

Broadcasting ensures that your event continues to have an impact long after it has taken place. Guests who were in Amsterdam can rewatch presentations at home, while others join (live) from anywhere. The authentic atmosphere of the Beurs van Berlage elevates every recording, turning your content into lasting, memorable experiences.

### Physical attendance

In spite of the upsides of broadcasting events, nothing beats the physical experience of attending an event. The pandemic has taught us that sharing content online is of great significance, but cannot replace important factors such as networking opportunities, informal contact and the experience of the event's atmosphere.

*The event industry had to quickly adapt to effectively utilise online content*





## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IN EVENT PLANNING

The introduction of AI in event management is not just a technological advancement; it's a paradigm shift that will ultimately completely reshape the way we plan events. Let's explore some of the ways AI can help us, while organising events in the near future.

### ChatGPT in event planning

Advanced AI tools like ChatGPT can inspire and refine your event concepts and ideas. Serving as a brainstorming partner, it can offer creative suggestions for themes, activities, and entertainment. By inputting basic parameters about your event such as event type, target audience, and desired atmosphere, ChatGPT can give you tailored ideas that might otherwise not have been considered.

Additionally, ChatGPT can assist in generating engaging content for promotional materials, writing speeches or scripts for hosts, and even suggest solutions to logistical challenges. This AI-driven approach will not only streamline your planning process, but also give a new impulse to creativity and innovation that keeps your events fresh and exciting.

### Taking personalisation to the next level

Nothing enhances the satisfaction of your attendees like personalisation. A perfect job for AI, that happens to excel at tailoring experiences at an individual level. For instance, AI can suggest personalised event schedules for attendees based on their interests, past behaviour, and engagement levels. This way, your attendees are exposed to sessions and activities that are most relevant to them. During these sessions, AI could even modify the content delivered, based on real-time feedback and engagement metrics from the audience.

### Boosting engagement

AI tools are already being used today to stimulate engagement before, during, and after events. For example, AI-driven algorithms can analyse attendee data to send personalised pre-event materials, resonating with their specific interests or industry roles. And how about using chatbots during your event that converse with attendees and provide them with personalised information? AI can even play a role in maintaining engagement after the event. It can analyse feedback collected through various channels to identify key themes and areas for improvement, or follow up with attendees, providing them with customised content.

### AI-powered analytics

Decision making will never be the same after the introduction of AI. By analysing data from previous events, AI can predict attendee behaviour, helping you anticipate needs, adjust logistics, and tailor marketing strategies. Also, AI can forecast the financial outcomes of various event scenarios, aiding in budget allocation and financial planning. This predictive capability helps maximise return on investment and minimise financial risks. And there's more. We'll dive a little deeper into the influence of AI-powered data in chapter 6: Data-powered event planning.



# 3

## VIRTUAL REALITY (VR) AND AUGMENTED REALITY (AR)

The use of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) at events is getting more and more common. These techniques offer many innovative and creative ways to enhance not only attendee engagement, but also the overall impact of your event.

### Virtual tours and immersing experiences

Visiting multiple venues before choosing the ideal location for your event? This is no longer necessary, since VR allows you to explore venues from anywhere in the world. The cutting-edge technique behind this provides you with a realistic sense of the space, without the need for physical travel.

On the event itself, VR can create immersive environments for inspirational sessions, workshops or training purposes. For example, a speaker discussing architectural designs or new construction technologies could transport attendees directly into a virtual building or construction site, allowing them to explore the environment and see the architecture up close without the need for physical travel. Take for example a look at [the virtual tour of the Beurs van Berlage](#).

### Boosting engagement

AR has the power to enhance real-world environments by overlaying digital information and images onto them. It turns static displays into interactive experiences, providing your attendees with additional content and engagement opportunities. The following examples are seen more and more at all sorts of events worldwide:

#### 1. Wayfinding solutions

Large venues can be difficult to navigate. AR can provide real-time directional cues and maps overlaid onto the venue, using the smartphone cameras of your attendees. This makes it easier to find their next session, the nearest restroom or emergency exits.



# 3

## VIRTUAL REALITY (VR) AND AUGMENTED REALITY (AR)

### 2. Product demonstrations and enhancements

At trade shows or product launches, AR can provide attendees with an enhanced view of a product. For example, pointing a device at a car might display its internal mechanics or offer a simulation of its safety features in action. This type of interaction allows for a deeper understanding of the product's capabilities.

### 3. Gamification of event experiences

If you want to add a fun factor to your event, AR games might be the way to go. They can be customised for the theme of your event, encouraging engagement and interaction among attendees. Possibilities end where your creativity does and depend on the nature of your event. What to think of an AR treasure hunt for example, or a leaderboard that tracks and rewards attendee engagement?

### 4. Live polling and feedback

During sessions and presentations, AR can be used to display live polling results or feedback in real-time. Presenters or speakers can ask questions, and as attendees respond via their mobile devices, aggregated responses can be visually displayed in augmented reality over the presentation screen.

### 5. Virtual speakers

Can you imagine a speaker at your event appearing on the stage as a 3D hologram? This might once have been a technique we could only dream of, but AR already makes it happen at modern events today. This can be especially useful for bringing in keynote speakers who are unable to attend in person, allowing them to present as if they were actually there.



# 4

## PRIORITISING WELL-BEING OPTIONS

At the Beurs van Berlage, we notice a growing demand for well-being options at and around events. Integrating well-being initiatives into your event demonstrates a commitment to attendee care and can significantly enhance engagement and satisfaction. Here's a few ideas on how you can embed well-being into your event:

### Create relaxation zones

Designate areas for attendees to unwind away from the main activities. These should offer comfortable seating, ambient music, and optional wellness activities like meditation or yoga sessions. A space for mental and physical relaxation allows attendees to recharge and return to the event refreshed.

*Integrating well-being initiatives into your event demonstrates a commitment to attendee care and can significantly enhance engagement and satisfaction.*

### Encourage physical activity

Promote physical health by incorporating activities like group walks or fitness classes. This not only aids physical well-being but also encourages networking and mental alertness.

### Mindfulness and mental health workshops

Include sessions focused on mindfulness, stress management, or emotional well-being to equip attendees with tools for maintaining mental health in professional settings.

Emphasising well-being will enhance the overall event experience, ensuring your attendees leave feeling cared for and valued.



# 5

## SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability has become a cornerstone of modern event planning, reflecting a global shift towards environmental responsibility and social accountability. As public awareness and regulatory demands increase, event planners are adopting sustainable practices not just to comply with standards but also to appeal to a more eco-conscious audience. So, what can we do to keep up?

### Selecting venues with green credentials

Choosing the right venue is critical in setting the foundation for a sustainable event. Planners are increasingly opting for venues that have strong sustainability credentials, such as Green Globe. These venues typically feature energy-efficient electricity systems and waste reduction or recycling strategies. Venues that are easily accessible by public transport are also increasingly popular for reasons of sustainability.

### Sustainable catering options

Modern events and sustainable venues offer catering services that use local, organic, and seasonal products, reducing the carbon footprint of food transportation. Offering vegan options and portion control are also sustainable choices in event catering. Additionally, caterers are encouraged to minimise food waste through careful planning and provide composting options for organic waste.

### Digital documentation

To reduce paper waste, many events are moving towards digital platforms for event materials, such as apps and websites, where attendees can access schedules, maps, and handouts electronically.



# 6

## DATA-DRIVEN EVENT PLANNING

Data-driven strategies are a must in today's event industry and this will only grow with the influence of AI-driven data tools. By collecting, analysing, and applying data, we can make informed decisions that improve the quality and impact of our events.

### Collecting event data

Collecting the right data before and after your event, brings valuable insights about your attendees and their subjects of interest. The following are just a few examples on how to collect and make use of data before and during your event.

#### Registration insights

The data collected during registration can provide a wealth of information about your attendees, including their professional backgrounds, interests, and preferences. This data can later be used for personalisation and targeted marketing.

#### Engagement analytics

Advanced tracking tools and mobile event apps can capture real-time data on attendee movements, session attendance, and engagement levels at various stages of your event. This gives you valuable insights on what captures attendees' interest and where improvements are needed.

#### Feedback mechanisms

Post-event surveys, live polling, and feedback forms are increasingly valued as they provide real-time, actionable insights that are essential for continuous improvement. This trend is driven by the growing emphasis on attendee experience and the need for event organisers to quickly adapt and tailor future events based on reliable attendee feedback.

With the right tools, the vast amount of data collected can be transformed into actionable insights. Combining historical data with real-time analytics will give you the power to predict future trends, attendee preferences, and potential challenges ahead.

### Applying data to improve future events

Data-driven event planning represents a shift in how events are designed, executed, and evaluated. By embracing a data-centric approach, event planners can not only meet but exceed attendee expectations, delivering experiences that are both memorable and impactful.



#### Resource optimisation

Data analytics help in optimising the allocation of resources such as space, time, and budget. By understanding which sessions are most popular or which time slots see peak engagement, planners can allocate resources more efficiently.

#### Targeted marketing

Data-driven insights enable precise targeting in the marketing of your event, ensuring that promotional materials reach those most likely to be interested and engaged. Data allows you to segment your audience based on various criteria such as demographics, behaviour, and engagement levels. This segmentation can be used to customise marketing messages, adjust event schedules, and create targeted networking opportunities.

#### ROI Measurement

By analysing pre-event and post-event data, the ROI of your event can be accurately measured across various metrics, from attendee satisfaction to financial outcomes. This comprehensive view helps you justify budget allocations and helps you make decisions in the planning of future events.



# INCLUSIVE EVENT PLANNING

Inclusiveness is increasingly recognised as a central value in modern event planning. It extends beyond facilitating accessibility standards to creating an environment where each attendee feels valued and included. What practical strategies and considerations should you look at to make sure your event is a welcoming experience for every participant?

## Understanding inclusiveness

Inclusiveness in event planning is about designing experiences that are accessible and engaging for people with diverse needs and preferences. This includes attendees with disabilities, different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, varying gender identities, and more. The goal is to create an atmosphere where diversity is not only acknowledged, but celebrated.

## Accessibility and transportation

Select venues that comply with local and international standards for accessibility. This includes wheelchair access, accessible restrooms and signage, as well as accessible transportation and accommodation options. This might involve arranging for accessible shuttles from hotels to the venue and ensuring that hotel rooms meet accessibility standards.

## Cultural and linguistic inclusion

Provide materials and simultaneous interpretation in multiple languages, especially if the event attracts an international audience. Consider the use of translation apps and real-time captioning services to make sessions more accessible. In addition to language, food can also be in- or exclusive. Make sure your catering service has a variety of options to choose from for every attendee.

## Content applicable to all

Cater to different learning styles by offering a mix of visual, auditory, and hands-on activities. Ensure that presentations are accessible to attendees with sensory disabilities by using clear, high-contrast materials and providing auditory descriptions where necessary.

## Gender inclusiveness

Allow attendees to specify their preferred pronouns during registration. Reflect this choice on name badges and in conference communications to promote gender inclusiveness. Provide all-gender restroom options to accommodate all attendees comfortably, ensuring privacy and respect for everyone's identity.

## Inclusive programming

Curate panels and speaker line-ups that reflect diversity in terms of race, gender, industry, and thought. This not only enriches the discussion, but also signals a commitment to inclusiveness.

## CONCLUSION

**As the event planning industry evolves, advanced technologies as well as non-technological trends are shaping the future of the event business. This whitepaper has outlined how innovations like artificial intelligence (AI), virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR), and data-driven strategies enhance operational efficiency and participant engagement. Additionally, it emphasises the growing importance of inclusiveness and sustainability, reflecting a shift towards ethical and responsible event management. Embracing these technological and ethical advancements will set you up for delivering events that are not only successful, but increasingly impactful. Events that elevate business meetings into lasting experiences, aligning with modern values and expectations.**



## ABOUT THE BEURS VAN BERLAGE

The Beurs van Berlage is a worldwide known premier-class venue for conferences, events and exhibitions. The building is a national monument located in the historic centre of Amsterdam, with a total area of 16,000m<sup>2</sup>. The monumental setting of the building has a unique appearance and can be transformed into a setting that is suitable for that specific event.

High quality and service, an impressive atmosphere and excellent facilities define the Beurs van Berlage. As a full service venue, we aim to leave you completely unburdened. We take on any question or needs you may have, varying from hotel services to state of the art AV-solutions and from tailor made catering solutions to event management advice. Our permanent professional partners offer tailor-made proposals regarding catering and audiovisual support.

At the Beurs van Berlage you can choose from various historic rooms that will undoubtedly inspire you and your guests. An unforgettable, high-class experience is central at all times. Are you looking for a location for your business meeting in the heart of Amsterdam? We have a selection of rooms that can be used in different ways, with physical space for up to 1,300 guests. Whether it concerns a staff- or shareholders meeting, charity gala, branche event or product presentation – at the Beurs van Berlage you will take your event to the highest possible level.

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