



## Conference Delegate Survey 2006

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PROJECT DETAILS

**Funded by:** Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA)  
**Commissioned to:** Lynn Jones Research (on-line survey & analysis)  
Brighter Business Solutions (BBS) (recruitment of conference organisers)

### Methodology

**Sample size:** 205 delegates (at three conferences)  
**Special conditions:** Conferences expecting 200+ delegates and some staying visitors  
**Databases:** MS Society, British Gynaecological Cancer Society, and the Institute of Physics databases of delegates attending their 2006 Manchester conferences.  
**Research method:** Three conferences participated in the survey and each professional conference organiser distributed a link to the on-line survey to their database of attended delegates.  
**Barriers :** Most professional conference organisers planned to do their own survey, researching specific elements of their conference and its agenda rather than gaining feedback on Manchester as a conference destination, and so chose not to participate.  
**Dates:** March - December 2006

### Objectives

- To analyse satisfaction levels among UK and international delegates attending conferences within the Greater Manchester area
- To quantify the visitor expenditure from conferences to the city
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Manchester conference product.
- To use the data to inform sector development and further establish Manchester as one of Europe's leading business destinations.

### KEY FINDINGS

#### Visitor Satisfaction

- First time visitors (35% of participation) were impressed with their conference experience and were more inclined to use the local services and spend more in the area by staying longer (2.72 nights on average compared to 2.26 for repeat visitors).

- The overall feedback on accommodation was rated highest by overseas delegates (average of 8.7 out of 10).
- The 'proximity of the accommodation to the venue', 'ease of access to the venue' and 'customer service at the venue' were identified as being the three critical and important elements of a successful conference.
- Manchester scored highly for the 'close proximity of the accommodation to the conference venue' but lowest for car parking facilities. It is also evident that expectations are not being met were the catering is concerned which is the key area that must be addressed.
- The elements of the venue that delegates were most impressed with were the 'high standard of the venue with good facilities', its 'accessibility' and its 'general organisation and layout'.
- Conference delegates rated Manchester higher as a conference destination than London and Glasgow.
- Edinburgh, Vienna and Barcelona were rated higher than Manchester overall. However Manchester received a higher rating than both Vienna & Barcelona from UK respondents who made up 91% of the sample. Please note though that although Vienna is clearly the preferred destination to attend a conference only 10 delegates had experienced a conference in Vienna so this is a low sample size.
- 40% of delegates said that they were likely to return to Manchester for a leisure visit within the following 12 months. Another 43% said that they were unlikely to visit Manchester for a leisure visit within the 12 months and 17% were undecided. This shows that conversion rates between a business and leisure traveller to Manchester are very encouraging.

#### Visit Expenditure

- The overall average delegate spend was £765.71 for an overseas delegate and £437.38 for a UK delegate.
- The average economic benefit per delegate to Manchester is estimated at £195. This includes averages of £132.66 for accommodation, £36.92 for food and drink, £17.07 for evening events and entertainment and £7.98 for travel within Manchester.

