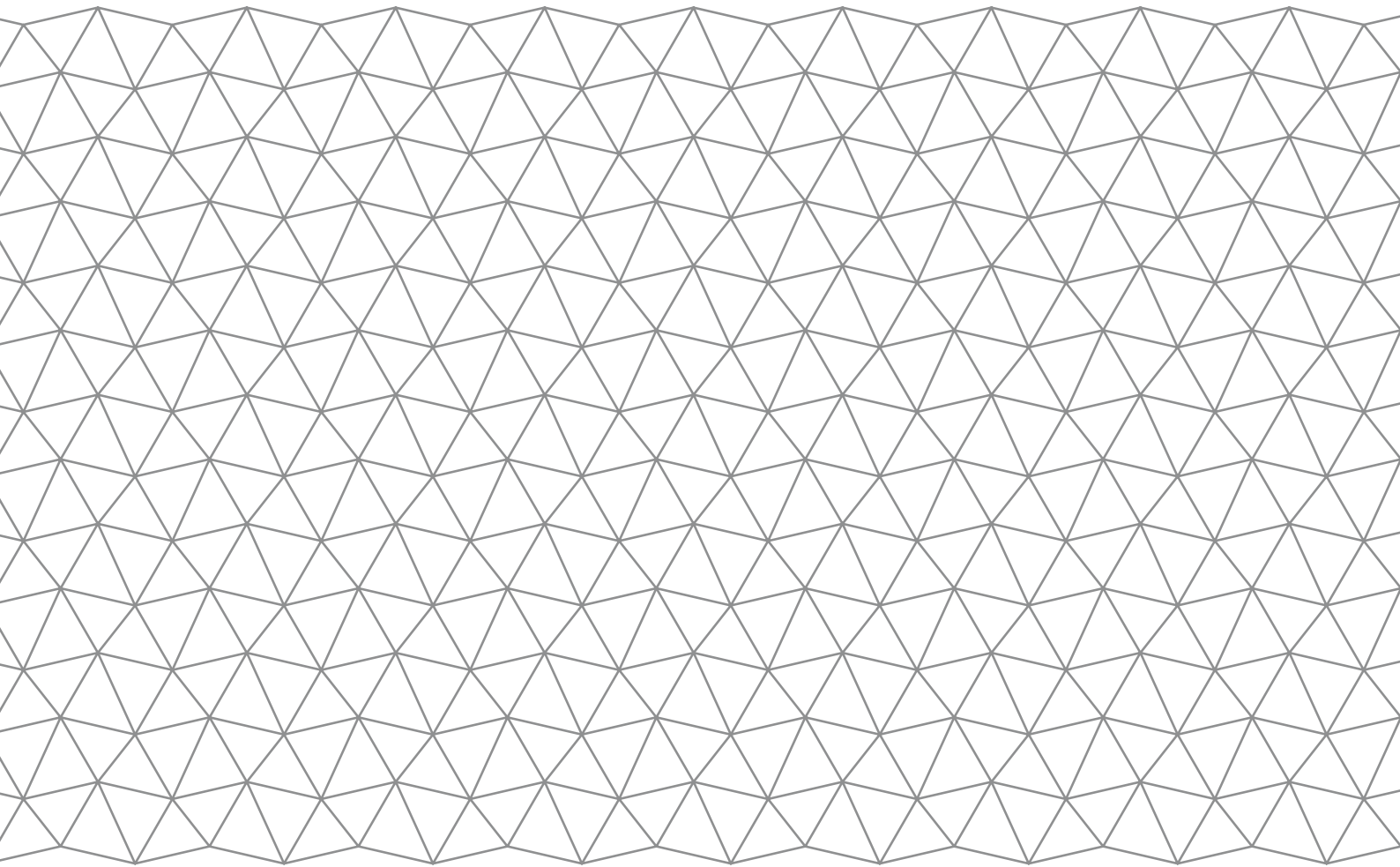


FEEDING YOUR PERFORMANCE
CREATING A LEGACY
FIRST YEAR REPORT



A mark of excellence

The 'Feeding Your Performance' stamp of approval is an assurance of our ongoing commitment to nourishing bodies and minds at ICC Sydney events. Its presence underscores our philosophy of creating world class cuisine through the selection of local, seasonal and, where possible, heritage produce.



Carefully selected seasonal, sustainable and locally sourced produce to boost alertness and drive energy levels.



"ICC Sydney understands the importance of creating a legacy and is committed to driving long term economic, societal and environmental benefits for our local and regional communities, delegates and visitors, as well as our own people. Our Feeding Your Performance philosophy is helping to do exactly this by putting New South Wales' outstanding regional produce and farmers on the global stage."

Geoff Donaghy, ICC Sydney CEO

This is an abridged version of the University of Technology Sydney, Business School report prepared by Associate Professor Carmel Foley, Associate Professor Deborah Edwards, Dr Bronwen Harrison and Dr Anja Hergesell. The report analyses procurement data from ICC Sydney and interviews with suppliers, either in the workplace or by phone, a NSW Wine Industry Association representative, a regional Destination Manager and team members from ICC Sydney. For purposes of anonymity and confidentiality, the names of the participants have not been used in this report.

INTRODUCTION

ICC Sydney is ideally positioned in the supply chain between its producers and clients to exert a significant influence on economic, social and environmental sustainability. ICC Sydney's Feeding Your Performance (FYP) program is a triple bottom line strategy with a suite of noteworthy initiatives in each of these areas, including a collaborative food and beverage strategy involving partnerships with a large number of New South Wales (NSW) producers. This report builds upon the Feeding Your Performance Case Study (Foley, Edwards, Harrison & Hergesell, 2017) that documents the collaborative benefits and effects of the sustainable and inclusive practices adopted by ICC Sydney, as part of its FYP program.

Background

Globally, there are hundreds of convention centres, which host more than 24,000 different association meetings each year (International Congress and Convention Association, 2016). Unlike the hotel sector (Bohdanowicz-Godfrey, 2013) and tourism operations sector (Carlsen & Edwards, 2013a) which have documented "practices towards more sustainable modes of operation" (Carlsen & Edwards, 2013a, p.33), little has been documented in the research literature about the collaborative potential of convention centres to deliver benefits beyond tourist visitation (Edwards, Foley, Dwyer, Schlenker & Hergesell, 2014; Mair and Jago, 2010).

ICC Sydney's FYP initiative encourages environmental, economic and socially sustainable behaviour as part of its organisational practices which sees the venue support and collaborate with a range of producers who are working to improve the agricultural ecosystems in their farming areas.

ICC Sydney is the largest integrated convention, exhibition and entertainment venue in Australia, situated in Sydney, NSW.

It sits at the epicentre of the A\$3.4 billion, 20-hectare transformation of Darling Harbour amongst an active dining, leisure and residential precinct. It connects to the city's financial, creative and education districts, acting as a true integrated hub for collaboration, inspiration and innovation.

Opening to the public in December 2016, it employs 1,663 team members (Annual Report 2017) and replaces the previous structure of the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre.

Implemented in 2016 prior to the official opening of the new convention centre, the FYP program represents the founding philosophy of ICC Sydney's cutting-edge legacy program.

About Feeding Your Performance

Initially developed as a point of difference to promote ICC Sydney and its offerings, FYP has become a cornerstone of the venue's strategy (ICC Sydney, 2016) and underpins many aspects of its service delivery. According to the Director of Culinary Services, the FYP program has manifested most notably in the organisation's food and beverage service areas where the aim is for restaurant quality meals to be made from fresh, seasonal and ethically sourced local produce. These are nutritionally balanced to energise the physical and mental performance of conference and trade show participants.

Supporting the energy levels of delegates has implications for a much broader range of conference outcomes that bring benefits to delegates, communities and economies.

To achieve these goals, ICC Sydney engaged a nutritionist who provided advice on menu ingredients that would improve concentration, such as the use of grains that deliver slow-release energy throughout the day.

"Feeding Your Performance is all about healthier eating or healthier meal options, particularly for our conference guests who might be with us all day or over several days. These menus, should clients choose them, are designed to energise bodies and minds throughout the day rather than experience energy spikes and lows after meals... nutritionally balanced options enable people to better concentrate and take in information."

(Executive Chef)

Another FYP goal is to support NSW regional economies by "buying fresh seasonal food from small regional producers in New South Wales" (Procurement Manager). To progress this philosophy, ICC Sydney identified and visited a range of farmers and small food producers to "establish and continue to build direct relationships with the people who grow or create the produce and who share our FYP approach" (Executive Chef). According to ICC Sydney's Procurement Manager, collaborations have been established with many locally (NSW) sourced producers.

A major stakeholder in the establishment of ICC Sydney is the NSW Government. The FYP program is supporting government ministers to deliver on their regional development goals for the state (NSW Government, 2015). The ministers are appreciative of the support given to producers in regional NSW. In 2016, Stuart Ayres MP, the NSW Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events, assisted ICC Sydney to launch their wine collection. At the launch, the Minister stated it is "a fantastic way to showcase the high quality and world class wines that we have available [in NSW]" (News.com.au, 2016). Niall Blair MP, NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Regional Water, Trade and Industry said:

"ICC Sydney demonstrates that a large venue can indeed buy local year-round while still maintaining supply. The venue should be commended for the model it has established by working hand-in-hand with producers there is a real connection between the grower and the chef which is truly unique and intimate. It has become even more apparent that New South Wales has outstanding produce and the NSW Government is committed to supporting venues like ICC Sydney in its effort to promote local farmers and regional communities."

Niall Blair MP, NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Regional Water, Trade and Industry

Feeding your performance dishes from ICC Sydney's Culinary Collection



In addition to contributions to economic development in regional NSW, the FYP philosophy is embedded in many other aspects of ICC Sydney culture and underpins their environmental sustainability and community outreach initiatives.

ICC Sydney is feeding the performance of the environment with a sustainability strategy that incorporates energy, waste, water and social targets. Energy resource efficiencies are delivered through smart design strategies integrated with cost efficient and renewable technologies, collaboration with OzHarvest to enable useable food from events to be redistributed to communities in need, and all recovered non-reusable organic waste being composted into fertilizer pellets. They also have the first community-funded solar energy project in Australia – Sydney Renewable Power Company; a project which allows members of the public to buy shares in a social venture that will own the building's solar array. Building on the sustainability of the venue, ICC Sydney is working closely with clients to encourage sustainable choices and to track the environmental impacts of their events.

ICC Sydney rests on the ancestral lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. As ICC Sydney works towards the launch of its multi-faceted reconciliation action plan in 2018, it has already completed cultural awareness training for ICC Sydney team members, invested in pathways to employment for First Nations students, and promotes Welcome to Country connections and Acknowledgement of Country information to event clients, to acknowledge and celebrate First Nations heritage and culture.

FYP is not a one-way benefit delivery system. Sustainable practices provide resource efficiencies for the entire organisation. Community partners support ICC Sydney to deliver relevant services and economic support of local producers ensures the delivery of high-quality food and beverages.

In summary, a philosophy aimed at sustainability and menu innovation (by delivering food to sustain delegate performance), became a strategic program supporting delegates and venue patrons, NSW producers, government and industry, the environment, students, entrepreneurs and the local community.

The Hawkesbury food bowl is located 50kms from the city of Sydney

FOOD AND BEVERAGE PROCUREMENT ANALYSIS



Wine

In 2017, ICC Sydney purchased 117,506 bottles of wine worth over A\$1.03 million 86 per cent of these bottles originated from NSW representing 84 per cent of ICC Sydney's overall wine spend. This exceeded the venue's overall target to develop a wine list comprising of 80 per cent NSW wines.

"It is one thing to source 80 per cent of ICC Sydney's wine collection from the New South Wales region but we also have to ensure these wines sell. I am delighted that we have achieved this goal. As demonstrated by the number of bottles sold and our expenditure in 2017. We are delivering for local wine producers."

(Sommelier)

Food

The collection of data for food purchases is complex. Food purchases can be made either directly from producers and/or via distributors. Part of the food data in this report is based on the distributor providing information on the origin of the purchases. Indeed, over the course of 2017 several direct producers asked ICC Sydney to buy their products via their distributors to lower the producers' administrative and distribution workload.

In 2017, ICC Sydney tracked 31 per cent of its NSW food purchases which generated A\$3.44 million in direct expenditure for a network of 87 NSW producers. The majority of this expenditure was spent on meat products, followed by bakery products.

The Multiplier Effect

The expenditure in this evaluation represents the direct effect resulting from purchasing the goods and services for the consumption of delegates attending events at ICC Sydney.

Tourism Research Australia (TRA) (2012) values tourism's total output multiplier at 1.92. ICC Sydney's direct expenditure on food and beverage supplies in NSW amounts to A\$4.31 million.

Applying the TRA multiplier to its total NSW expenditure in 2017, UTS conservatively estimates that ICC Sydney has delivered approximately A\$8.28 million to the NSW economy in 2017 through its food and wine purchases.

\$4.3 
MILLION
DIRECT
EXPENDITURE
ON NSW FRESH
PRODUCE AND
WINE

\$8.3 
MILLION
DELIVERED TO THE
NSW ECONOMY
THROUGH FOOD AND
WINE PURCHASES



CASSEGRAIN WINES

FIRST RIDGE WINES
LOGAN WINES
ROBERT OATLEY VINEYARDS
ROBERT STEIN WINERY AND
VINEYARD
SECRET GARDEN WINES

ALLANDALE WINERY
BIMBADGEN WINES
BROKENWOOD WINES
COCKFIGHTERS GHOST WINES
DAVID HOOK WINES
DE LULIIS WINES
HARKHAM WINERY
KEITH TULLOCH WINES
KRINKLEWOOD VINEYARD
MARGAN WINES
MCWILLIAM'S WINES
SCARBOROUGH WINES
THOMAS WINES
TULLOCH WINES
TYRRELL'S WINES

ANGULLONG WINES
BRANGAYNE OF ORANGE
PHILIP SHAW WINES
PRINTHIE WINES
ROSS HILL WINES
SEE SAW WINES
SWIFT WINES
SWINGING BRIDGE
TAMBURLAINE WINES
WINDOWRIE WINES

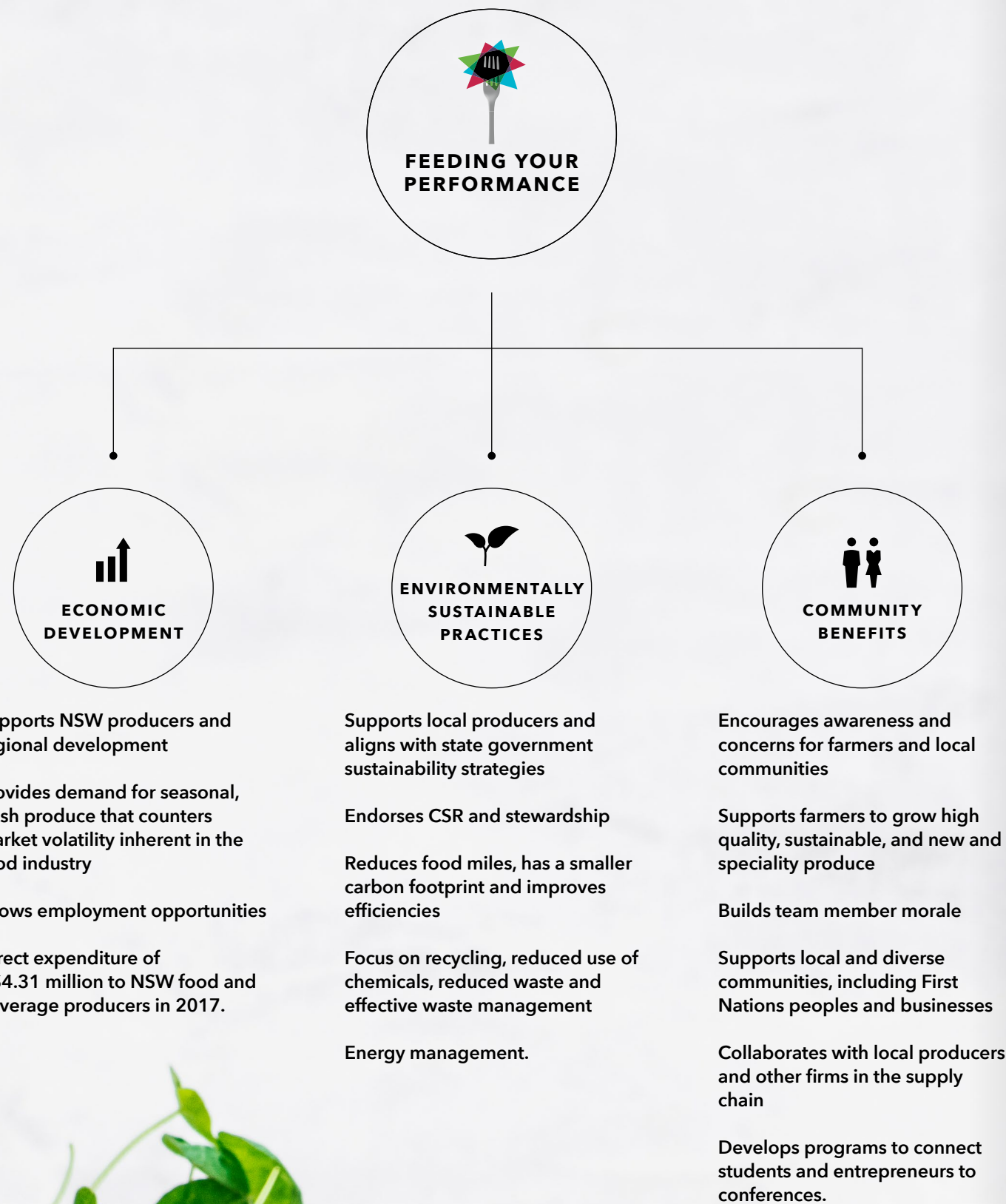
CUTTAWAY HILL
LARK HILL WINES
TERTINI WINES

AIROLDI FINE WINES
DE BORTOLI WINES
LILLYPILLY WINES

CHALKERS CROSSING
HUNGERFORD HILL WINES
MCWILLIAM'S WINES



KEY CONTRIBUTIONS & BENEFICIARIES



Economic Development

THE STATE OF PLAY

- Small and medium enterprises account for 98 per cent of the 22,000 businesses in the agrifood sector in Australia
- The agricultural industry is a significant employer in Australia, supporting employment for 1.68 million people, particularly small producers in rural and regional areas
- Australian food and beverage is highly regarded in terms of quality and food safety, and gastronomic tourism is becoming increasingly important to the tourism industry
- Intense urbanisation has damaged our links with the land and food
- Research has shown that local food supply chains can regenerate rural development.

ICC SYDNEY'S CONTRIBUTION

- Sydney restaurants and competitor venues are following ICC Sydney's lead in supporting local winemakers and producers
- Producers are experiencing increased cash flow, increased production, improvements to infrastructure and job growth
- Collaborating with ICC Sydney allows producers to focus on their core competencies of delivering high quality produce
- ICC Sydney's direct investment in NSW produce was at least A\$4.31 million in 2017.

The agricultural industry is a significant employer in Australia, supporting employment for 1.68 million people, particularly small producers in rural and regional areas (Spencer & Kneebone, 2012). Small and medium enterprises account for 98 per cent of the 22,000 businesses in the agrifood sector in Australia (Nous Group 2015).

Australian food and beverage is highly regarded in terms of quality and food safety, and gastronomic tourism is becoming increasingly important to the tourism industry (Tourism Australia, 2017). However, many NSW growers and producers in rural and regional areas struggle to compete with low cost imports, and unemployment is significantly higher than the state average in regional and rural NSW (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

Economic development depends on inclusive economic growth, including employment in vulnerable communities (UNWTO, 2017). According to the Destination Manager we interviewed, urban centres with their comparative wealth sometimes forget that they are part of a broader community that includes rural and regional neighbours-in the context of Sydney, "that there's life beyond the Blue Mountains".

Intense urbanisation has damaged our links with the land and food and moreover, our knowledge of the threats to our food bowl is minimal and this has "undermined our inclination to care, and desire to take action for the collective good" (Pretty, 2013, p. 2).

Research has shown that local food supply chains can regenerate rural development (King, Hand & Gómez, 2015; Ilbery & Maye, 2005), but this requires the tourism and associated hospitality sector to recognise the importance of sourcing locally, to support small business and community livelihoods.

According to the Destination Manager, "... the fact that ICC Sydney has gone out with that public statement [in support of regional NSW] is a game changer". Indeed, small indications of a trickle-down effect in terms of both action and awareness are beginning to emerge.

"They are also reporting that other Sydney venues are now responding to ICC Sydney's commitment to local produce and are asking for local product. A major inner-city venue, and sometime competitor to ICC Sydney, has "had to respond and [now] have a local component. I would imagine over the next couple of years they're going to have to look at modifying that even further."

(Producer)



SUPPORTING LOCAL PRODUCERS

Cherry Case Study

The Executive Chef at ICC Sydney has made good connections with many producers through face-to-face visits to farms and regional communities. He notes that he learns a great deal from each of these visits, about food, and about the issues faced by the small producers. An incident that occurred in 2017, related to us by both a producer and the Destination Manager, provides an example of the Executive Chef's commitment to supporting NSW farmers.

A NSW grower had a crop of cherries that had to be picked early due to approaching storms. The cherries were still a bit green and unsuitable for retail so the grower was looking at losing the entire crop. The producer rang the Executive Chef at ICC Sydney on behalf of the grower to see if the Executive Chef could help by purchasing some of the crop. The Executive Chef agreed to purchase the whole 300kgs. The producer then drove the cherries to ICC Sydney and noted that:

"it was a good deal and look, Tony actually wants to look after the growers and I think it's in his interest to have good produce coming there, direct from the growers."

Local food supply chains have been found to exert positive economic influences on their local region, mainly in terms of economic growth and employment (Ilbery & Maye, 2005). They are seen as the new paradigm to regenerate rural development, globally. An exploratory study of seven European countries, representing 75-85 per cent of the farms in Europe, determined that the additional net value generated by local food supply chains on top of conventional agricultural production was positive in all cases (Renting et al., 2003).

Similar outcomes have been identified by studies conducted in the US and the UK over the past decade (Otto and Varner, 2005; King, Hand & Gómez, 2015; Kneafsey, et al., 2013; Hughes, Brown, Miller & McConnell, 2008). Local food strategies have been found to reverse the decline of rural services and the depletion in food and farming physical infrastructure (Kumar, Agrawal & Sharma, 2013).

There has been slow growth in the food market in Australia since 2008 (Spencer & Kneebone, 2012). Compounding this is the issue of ongoing volatility of the operating environment for food producers caused by both climatic and economic conditions. In Australia, the cost reduction strategies of the two biggest retailers in the fresh food market, Coles and Woolworths, have contributed to the erosion of farmers' margins resulting in many small growers exiting the industry (IBISWorld, 2017).

The volatility of the operating environment for food producers is not expected to decrease in the near future and, in this context, ICC Sydney's strategy to provide a level of stability for their food producers is very welcome.

"We're not just feeding the performance of our delegates, we're feeding the business performance of multiple small operators. The stability given to a farmer because they have guaranteed business, guaranteed payment and employment is a powerful way in which convention centres, and cities more broadly, can make a positive contribution to regional areas and it's something we are very proud of at ICC Sydney."

ICC Sydney CEO

PRODUCER OUTCOMES

Olive Oil Case Study

An olive oil producer is providing a unique blend for ICC Sydney and the relationship makes good business sense. As being able to develop one recipe for 1,000 litres of olive oil works well for their business model. Additionally, the producer is happy to work with a customer who is showcasing their product to an international audience:

Creating a bespoke blend for ICC Sydney is "showcasing (Australian produce) to the world...it makes sense for us to want to work with them to give them something unique and different...the fact that ICC Sydney has an ethos of promoting and representing high quality New South Wales and Australian produce, and for us to then be on that menu, is an automatic win." (Producer)

The producer went on to mention that they shared ICC Sydney's public relations and marketing initiatives of their products through their own social media channels.



One of the producers stated their partnership with ICC Sydney in 2017 has contributed to increased sales, the purchase of more land to increase production, and certification as an organic farmer.

Another of the producers has won numerous awards for their products. The partnership with ICC Sydney has allowed them to consolidate their business and they have added an extended tasting room to their property.

One producer reported a modest addition to their sales in 2017 but noted that ICC Sydney is not their biggest customer. This producer believes this is because not all ICC Sydney's customers are prepared to pay premium prices for artisan food.

A further producer cited improved financial, reputational and collaborative outcomes that have resulted from the partnership with ICC Sydney. This producer is now collaborating with another ICC Sydney producer to source game product. This relationship with the game producer has now extended into other parts of the producer's business.

A COMMITMENT TO NSW WINE

ICC Sydney is also providing opportunities for NSW wine makers. In 2016, the business made a conscious decision to include a minimum of 80 per cent NSW wines on its wine list.

The Director of Culinary Services explained that they were very aware from the outset the impact ICC Sydney wine collection could have for NSW wine makers, from a volume and sales perspective, as well as for regional brand awareness. The wine list was created through a blind tasting of just over 1,300 NSW wines ensuring that every wine earned its place on the wine list for its quality and not its price.

Not only did they achieve a wine list comprising 80 per cent NSW wines but their sales exceeded the 80 per cent mark in 2017.

The Industry Association Representative is understandably pleased with this outcome, saying:

"ICC Sydney is a 'good avenue' to showcase NSW wine to a wider audience" and to "show our customer base that we are involved in some of the premier venues of New South Wales". Producers have confirmed that the strategy is helping them to grow their business, with one producer reporting their sales to ICC Sydney, "enables us to get a bit of certainty, a bit of volume in our business. They've grown with us, they're very good at communication, very good at supporting us."



JOBS

A number of the producers interviewed referred to small impacts on their businesses in terms of the people they employed as a direct result of their collaboration with ICC Sydney in 2017. Some producers were able to absorb most of the extra demands into their personal workloads, while others are employing extra full-time, part-time or casual staff. Another producer stated they will need to employ more workers, but it takes time to have the confidence to do this.

More significant jobs growth outcomes will take longer to emerge as these businesses grow and consolidate. However, as noted by the potato farmer in the first case study, even a small increase in employment in a regional community is significant.

Throughout 2017, ICC Sydney have also supported the local community through recruitment of diverse groups including people with learning disabilities, the LGBTI community, youth from technical colleges and hospitality schools, working mothers and mature workers. They have achieved this by "partnering with diversity organisations that focus on specific demographics" (Director of Human Resources). In 2017, ICC Sydney had 351 full time and 1,312 casual team members representing a 17 per cent increase in full time positions.

Collaborating with ICC Sydney allows producers to focus on their core competencies of delivering high quality produce. The producers welcome the opportunity for not only the promotion of their own business but for their regions and communities. Outcomes have included increased cash flow, increased production, improvements to infrastructure, innovative business plans, and a direct investment into the businesses of NSW producers of A\$4.31 million in 2017.



An orchardist in Orange, Central NSW (image credit: Destination NSW)



Environmental sustainability

- 🍇 ICC Sydney choose producers based on both their geographical location and the quality of their produce
- 🍇 The venue sources the majority of its food and wine from local (NSW) producers and aims to reduce 'food miles' and its carbon footprint
- 🍇 Producers are vetted for sustainability through a comprehensive questionnaire process, and in many cases through face-to-face interviews and tours of farms and facilities
- 🍇 ICC Sydney is committed to training the kitchen brigade to use the whole of the produce to minimise waste
- 🍇 ICC Sydney has developed a collaborative partnership with OzHarvest to donate unused excess food to disadvantaged members of the community.

Environmental sustainability in agriculture means good stewardship of the natural systems and resources that farms rely on (Farm Table, 2018). In line with this, ICC Sydney choose producers based on both their geographical location and the quality of their produce, which goes hand-in-hand with sustainable farming practices. By purchasing from producers who embrace these sustainable farming practices, ICC Sydney is supporting the sustainability efforts of a group of very passionate producers.

ICC Sydney sources the majority of its food and wine from local (NSW) producers ahead of interstate and international alternatives which contributes to reduced "food miles" (Shukla & Jharkharia, 2013) and a smaller carbon footprint (King et al, 2015; Kneafsey et al, 2013).

Supporting sustainable producers

ICC Sydney's FYP program makes a significant contribution to the development and sustainability of the NSW agrifood industry, as well reducing its environmental impact with a lower carbon footprint, attributable to the local supply chain.

ICC Sydney undertook a comprehensive process to assess the sustainability credentials of producers and in many cases, this was conducted through face-to-face interviews and tours of farms and facilities. Just one example is a producer who achieved organic certification 12 months ahead of time.

Waste management

ICC Sydney's commitment to waste management is extensive. This includes the Executive Chef developing dishes and training his kitchen brigade to use the whole of the produce to minimise waste. Additionally, unused

excess food is donated to OzHarvest to feed disadvantaged members of the community while food waste is collected by a composting company who dry the food to make potting mix.

In 2017, ICC Sydney partnered with Sydney Water to serve water in recyclable glass bottles, saving the use and waste of 775,000 plastic bottles (ICC Sydney Annual Report 2017). Rain water is also collected and managed with a 200-kilolitre rain tank which reduces ICC Sydney's use of potable water for irrigation and toilet flushing purposes (ICC Sydney Annual Report 2017).

Energy management

In July 2017, ICC Sydney received an award for its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) (<https://www.usgbc.org/projects/international-convention-centre-sydney>). Two exemplary energy management initiatives include a community funded 520KW solar array (<http://www.sydneyrenewable.com>) and a car charging station for 25 vehicles.

In summary, ICC Sydney is benefitting the broader community and the environment by reducing its ecological footprint in a number of ways. Most significantly, it is contributing to improved ecosystems by supporting farmers and small business who take sustainability seriously and have adopted roles of environmental stewardship in their areas of expertise.

Oyster farmer, Tathra NSW (image credit: Destination NSW)



Community benefits

- Local food supply chains serve to strengthen the relationships between members in food chain communities, particularly farmers
- Focus on local food builds greater awareness and empathy for farmers
- All new team members at ICC Sydney are inducted into the FYP philosophy, playing a critical role in creating a lasting legacy
- Local food schemes have been shown to contribute to increased knowledge and behavioural change around healthy eating
- ICC Sydney is helping to build greater acknowledgement and celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- ICC Sydney is providing opportunities for students and entrepreneurs from NSW to connect with delegates at international conferences at ICC Sydney.

Supporting regional communities

Local food supply chains serve to strengthen the relationships between members in food chain communities, particularly farmers (Mundler & Laughrea, 2016). Choosing locally produced food promotes social and professional recognition for farmers and helps to support social and professional reintegration for vulnerable or marginalised farmers (Mundler & Laughrea, 2016).

Studies have shown that people buy local food, to a large extent, to support farmers (Mundler & Laughrea, 2016; Corsten & Felde; 2005; Arsil, Li, Bruwer & Lyons, 2014). Empathy and respect for farmers was evident in all the interviews conducted for this case study however, there continues to be conflicts for land use due to our expanding cities.

Minister Blair believes NSW has an important role to play in raising “awareness around other types of production systems that are available such as aquaculture, hydroponics and some of the more innovative ways of producing food”.

“ICC Sydney is an exemplary showcase of sustainable agricultural practices and the positive benefits of supply chain management in NSW. When someone sees a cheese on a plate that they would normally associate with another country or region, to be able to celebrate the work of our local NSW farmers is really special”.

ICC Sydney CEO said that convention centres play a major role in driving economic benefit for the city's in which they operate however, it's important to look beyond the city border to regional communities.

“As urbanisation increases, cities and their convention centres have a role to play in supporting the regional areas that feed them and support their event delivery. If our success is underpinned by delivering restaurant-quality produce, then we have an important role to play in supporting the supply chain that enables this.

Supporting local communities

ICC Sydney's Director of Human Resources provided information on ways in which ICC Sydney supports the local community through recruitment with a particular focus on diversity groups. ICC Sydney is collaborating with a number of partner organisations, providing jobs and training. In 2017, just some of the organisations it partnered with includes Working Mothers Connect, Pride in Diversity, Job Support for disability, and Sydney TAFE to attract a diverse workforce, including mature-age workers.

All team members who join ICC Sydney are inducted into the FYP philosophy as part of their onboarding training which has noticeable benefits for team morale.

The Director of Culinary Services noted: “I'm very proud to be a part of [ICC Sydney's FYP program] ... a legacy for the future, which is an opportunity that I wouldn't have had anywhere else”.

Minister Blair believes that the sustainability training that ICC Sydney's culinary team receive is a legacy that will deliver benefits to Sydney's hospitality industry as team members progress throughout their careers.

Farmer in Morpeth, Maitland NSW (image credit: Destination NSW)

Local food schemes have been shown to contribute to increased knowledge and behavioural change around healthy eating (Mundler & Laughrea, 2016; Kneafsey et al, 2013) and ICC Sydney's FYP program is contributing to a new level of nutritional awareness in specific ways.

- ① The business is supporting growers who are working towards producing food with exceptional nutritional value
- ② It provides delegates and visitors with nutritionally superior food
- ③ Finally, ICC Sydney has formed a relationship with OzHarvest, an organisation that collects quality excess food from commercial outlets and delivers it direct and free of charge, to more than 900 charities, assisting vulnerable men, women and children across Sydney (<http://www.ozharvest.org/what-we-do/>).



A further initiative that began in 2017 is ICC Sydney's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The RAP to be launched in 2018, includes:

- continuing to deliver cultural awareness training for ICC Sydney team members
- providing pathways to employment for First Nations hospitality students (seven students have already graduated from pre-employment programs with three students now team members at ICC Sydney)
- recognising First Nations heritage through an Acknowledgement of Country displayed on external digital screens
- promoting appropriate Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country information to event clients
- celebrating local artists within the venue
- building relationships with key stakeholders including the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, Supply Nation, First Australians Chamber of Commerce and NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce.

Deb Barwick, Chairperson of the First Australians Chamber of Commerce and Industry and CEO of the NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce, said ICC Sydney is helping to build greater acknowledgement and celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture with its reconciliation plan and client Legacy Program.

"This initiative will help connect the millions of people it is expected to welcome through its doors each year with local Aboriginal businesses and culture in a purposeful and enriching way... From investment in the development of a Welcome to Country video, purchasing Indigenous Australian produce from local Aboriginal businesses, to facilitating cultural tours of Sydney and local artist collaboration, it will open up a myriad of opportunities."

(Deb Barwick cited in ICC Sydney 2017)

Finally, as part of its client Legacy Program launched in 2017, ICC Sydney is increasing awareness of opportunities through initiatives labelled Generation Next and Innovators and Entrepreneurs, which will provide opportunities for students and entrepreneurs from NSW to connect with delegates at international conferences at ICC Sydney. Steering Committee member and CEO of Arinex, an Australian professional conference organiser, Roslyn

McLeod (cited in ICC Sydney 2017), said the Innovators and Entrepreneurs program is set to be a world leading example of stakeholder, industry and entrepreneurial cross-collaboration.

In summary, ICC Sydney's FYP program is strengthening relationships in NSW communities between regional producers and urban consumers, increasing knowledge about healthy eating, contributing to team morale and inclusive recruitment policies at ICC Sydney while helping people in need in the Sydney community. The program is successfully connecting local and international visitors with Aboriginal culture and businesses and has progressed plans to connect students and entrepreneurs with international conference delegates. OzHarvest, an organisation that collects quality excess food from commercial outlets and delivers it, direct and free of charge, to more than 900 charities, assisting vulnerable men, women and children across Sydney (<http://www.ozharvest.org/what-we-do/>).

Carrots from regional NSW





Challenges and opportunities



CHALLENGES

Logistics, particularly around delivery sizes and costs, is challenging for many small regional businesses

Increased supplier numbers is resource intensive for the venue

Client demand

Managing communication & change in a fast-paced, events industry

Building trust and managing risk supplier-side.



OPPORTUNITIES

Develop systems that manage delivery volumes

Build collaborative relationships that lead to competitive advantage

Maintain open communication channels

Continued education on the benefits of FYP

Manage direct and indirect relationships

Identify strategies to manage risk

Diversify business models with agritourism.

Logistics

The world is becoming increasingly urbanised and the concentration of people living in cities like Sydney is rising. This means that increasing amounts of food need to be delivered into cities to feed growing numbers of people. Food supply chains can be more complex than other supply chains. Many of the goods delivered require cold chain technology. Other constraints can include short lead times and specific handling procedures (Morganti et al., 2014). ICC Sydney situated in a central city location receives food and beverage deliveries several times per day.

"What you tend to find is the large companies, the distributors, they will deliver here five days a week, even six days. Whereas, the regional New South Wales producers will come to Sydney every second or third day and the minimum order would have to be about \$400-\$500 to ensure its commercially viable for them to come here. Another consideration is that they also need to work on the farm and therefore, can't travel daily."

(Procurement Manager)

ICC Sydney Executive Chef's approach to sourcing food from small producers means that the logistics are more

inevitably more complex. However, he believes that the investment of time in developing systems that manage higher volumes of delivery are integral for maintaining these relationships and enables them to be better chefs, delivering outstanding results for ICC Sydney clients and guests.

The Executive Chef provides an example of the way in which he engages his producers:

"We have Sibos coming in October, the world's most prestigious financial services event. For large international events like this, because we plan months, sometimes years, in advance, we're able to work with producers to grow or create produce specifically for that event. I've already placed orders with farmers to grow [carrots etc.] for the dishes that have been confirmed for the bespoke Sibos menus. This advance planning is great for us and great for farmers."

ICC Sydney holds a number of direct partnerships with NSW producers and it also works with producers via distributors.

*Tomato and Strawberry farmer, Port Macquarie NSW
(image credit: Destination NSW)*

One producer notes that using a distributor can sometimes disrupt a personal relationship with the buyer, however, this is not an issue with ICC Sydney as they maintain a relationship with ICC Sydney's sommelier outside of the day-to-day business:

"[Our distributor deals with the] demands of delivery, invoicing, all manner of things - it's just easier for us not to handle that part of the business. Our relationship with [ICC Sydney] is somewhat second hand, but we do have a direct relationship [with ICC Sydney sommelier] and that's primarily I think the best way to keep any ongoing business. We don't deal with the nuts and bolts, we just deal with the satisfaction of the customer."

The use of a distributor did not work out well for one producer and they moved to direct supply in 2017.

"We've picked up a freight company that [delivers to our customers]. We tried a courier who said it was not worth his while for the little orders, so we use a refrigerated freight company."

Another producer is collaborating with other local producers to overcome delivery issues:

"I [now] use [a local acquaintance], he goes to the fish markets, he goes down four days a week to Sydney with the fish, and he puts my vegetables on that and then he's got a courier [who] just comes out of the fish markets over the hill ... and straight into Tony [Executive Chef] every morning at 6:00am, it's the perfect relationship. That's five hours back home working on the farm and keeping control over the workers I've got here."

Logistics, particularly around delivery, can be one of the most problematic aspects of the business for small, regional producers. ICC Sydney's Director of Culinary Services said that logistics is among the first things discussed when speaking to potential new producers.

Building trust

ICC Sydney's producers are managing this in a multitude of ways. For some, it has required a number of trials and adjustments, and for most, it requires some level of compromise. It is an area that governments might consider providing further support in order to boost regional development. Minister Blair noted that the issue of freight and logistics for NSW producers is something that the NSW Government is currently working on.

Throughout the study, producers cited trust as an important aspect of their relationship with ICC Sydney.

In line with this, ICC Sydney has demonstrated a commitment meeting with farmers and producers and regional representatives to deepen relationships and open communication channels.

One such initiative in 2017 saw the CEO of ICC Sydney, as well as members of the Culinary and Communication teams, visit the Orange region. A series of interviews with local media helped spread the word that ICC Sydney was seeking quality producers to connect with, while strengthening relationships with existing producers. Looking ahead, the senior team has plans to visit the Hunter Valley, Mudgee, the Southern Highlands and Northern NSW in 2018-19.

Communication is an area that was viewed differently by producers. For some it was an area of strength as evidenced below.

"Tony's very easy to talk to - he's straight down the line. Yeah you can have a good moment, a laugh and that, but then when its business, this is what we need, this is how we need it, can we do it. And if I can't do it, I say it. If we can, we do. There's no to and fro - and that's how a business should be. A business should be built on relationships these days, it's not just about products."

(Producer)

For others, it is an area that needs improvement, particularly in terms of enabling producers to plan production schedules.

In summary, open communication channels and following through on commitments will result in major gains in building trust. Visits from ICC Sydney executive team is just one of the ways the venue is working to develop relationships and trust.

Managing risk

Most large venues do not initiate programs like FYP, which has the dual goals of sourcing quality produce and providing economic support to regional producers.

ICC Sydney is taking risks by sourcing goods from hand picked producers rather than using solely large distributors who can meet demand. Producers are equally taking risks by scaling their businesses to meet the needs of ICC Sydney. Trust is required on all sides for collaborations to remain successful.

One producer reported that ICC Sydney team members were clear in their communications which is key as communication is critical in managing risk for his business.

Some of the producers are able to manage risk by maintaining a diverse customer base. For example, one producer ensures that none of their customers make up more than 10 per cent of the business. Others are, as yet, not in a position to do this.

ICC Sydney has flagged agritourism as an area of interest, to be developed in the future in conjunction with Destination NSW and other stakeholders. There may be scope to develop food and wine trails and other agritourist experiences in regional NSW that can be marketed to delegates.

In summary, the FYP program is contributing to positive business outcomes for small producers in rural and regional NSW. Jobs growth is emerging and likely to increase as confidence grows and relationships mature. Logistics continue to be a problem for small producers in regional areas and this is an area in which the NSW government is continuing to concentrate its focus.



CONCLUSIONS

Several themes emerged as we engaged with the producers, ICC Sydney and the literature. Economic development goals for ICC Sydney were achieved in terms of their support for local producers. Producer outcomes in 2017 include increased cash flow, increased production, improvements to infrastructure, innovative business plans and a direct investment into the businesses of NSW producers by ICC Sydney of A\$4.31 million.

Jobs growth was surprising for the short period, which this report covers. However, there are indications that regional jobs growth can grow as producer collaborations and confidence grows. Logistics, particularly around delivery, can be one of the most problematic aspects of the business for small, regional producers and may be an area where governments might consider providing further support. Major gains have been made in 2017 in building effective communication and trust between ICC Sydney and NSW producers. Producers are tentatively moving towards deepening their collaborative relationship by improving their communication with ICC Sydney. Visits from the executive team at ICC Sydney have been very beneficial in this area.

An issue for further consideration is risk and the importance of producers developing strategies to manage risk. ICC Sydney may be able to assist in three ways:

- Provide advance warning and clear communication about any plans to terminate relationships. This will give producers time to identify other markets and to adjust their business practices.
- Government has a role to play in capitalising on the leadership and vision provided by ICC Sydney to encourage more firms to purchase from NSW producers. Particularly as ICC Sydney has demonstrated the “possibilities” that can be achieved from a collaborative supply chain model.
- There is the potential for agritourism to be developed via food and wine trails and other agritourist experiences in conjunction with Destination NSW and other stakeholders.

This report has provided an analysis of the collaborative benefits and effects of the inclusive practices adopted by a convention centre, ICC Sydney, as part of its FYP program. ICC Sydney is contributing to the economic development of small businesses in regional NSW. The report presents strong evidence of how the direct interface plays out in practice. Advancing their relationships and knowledge of each other because of an emphasis on people-to-people interactions, the gains are fruitful for both parties.

The ICC Sydney FYP program is a clear example of an organisation with a distinct economic sustainability agenda, actively in search of collaborative producers and enabling those producers to come up with solutions (Hjalager, 2018). It demonstrates that in tourism, collaboration and partnerships can form a basis for resilient action.

The triple bottom line approach taken by ICC Sydney in its FYP program provides a blueprint for innovation that can be applied in many sectors. State and national governments could adopt similar strategies in government run venues for supporting the producers in their own regions, contributing to economic objectives for the economic support of rural and regional areas. Commercial venues in urban centres could support their regions by purchasing and showcasing high quality local produce, thereby enhancing their own credentials for superior food and beverage offerings as well as sustainable practices.

Finally, associations and international conference organisers who wish to generate legacies from their events will find very fertile ground and an outstanding level of support with ICC Sydney.

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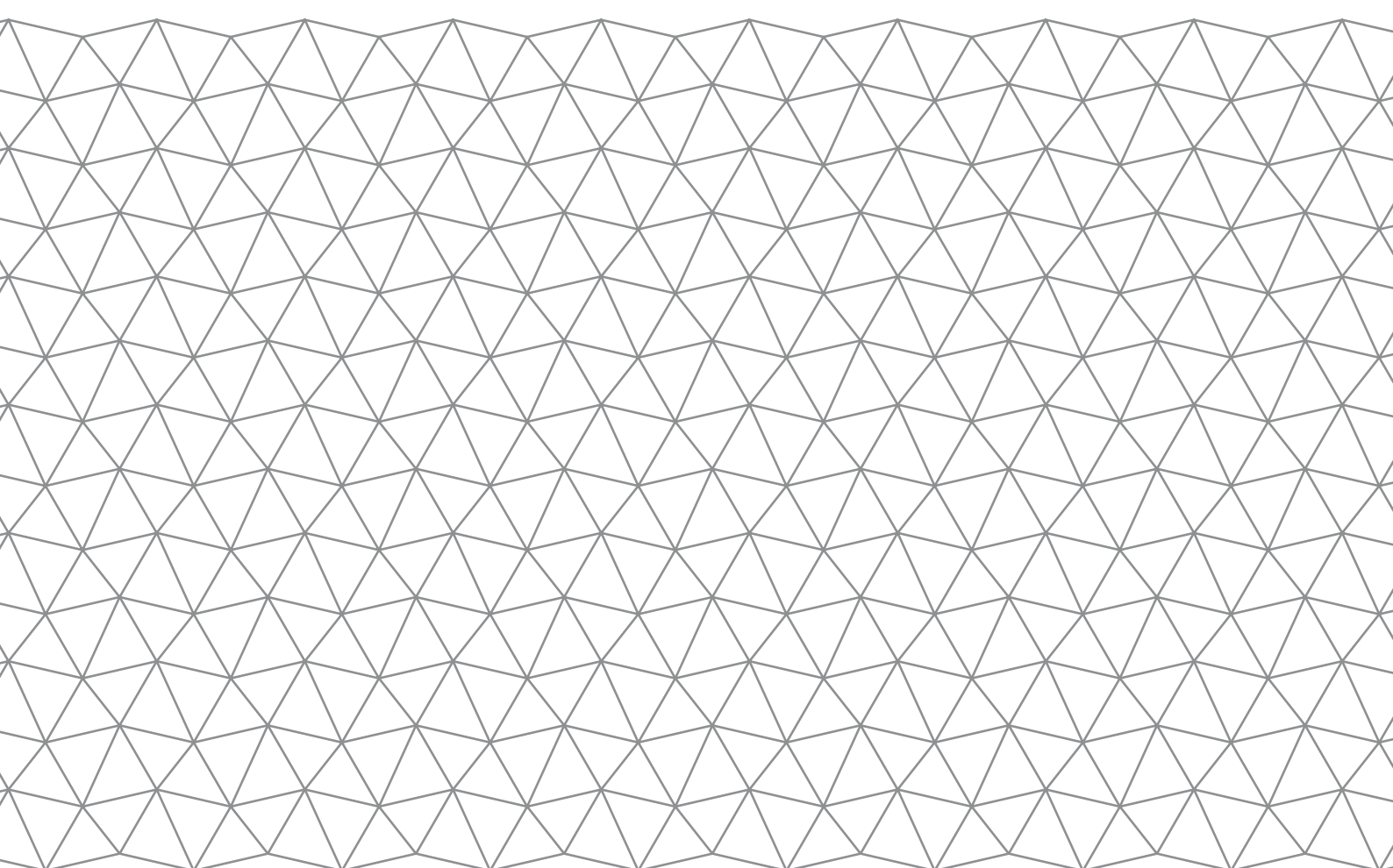
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