Flanders
State of the Art



# SMALL CITIES, GREAT VENUES, UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES

HOW FLEMISH CITIES AND VENUES
MAKE YOUR CONFERENCE A SUCCESS

VISITFLANDERS

# FLANDERS OFFERS EVERYTHING YOU FIND IMPORTANT



BY **EVELYNE BARDYN**
**Head of Convention Bureau**
VISIT**FLANDERS**
**Convention Bureau**

Recently, a large-scale survey took place, polling the needs of associations. The survey asked them what they found important when choosing a location for their conference.

Topping the list was accessibility. The presence of local expertise was a close second. And the venue's assets came third.

In Flanders, we were delighted with the results of this survey. After all, our region excels on all these points.

For example, **Flanders, the northern region of Belgium, is very easy to reach**. Not only by plane, from every corner of the world, but also by train. In an hour and a half, you can travel to Brussels from Paris, London or Amsterdam by rail. Even Frankfurt and Berlin are just a few hours away.

> In 1.5 hours, you can travel to Brussels from Paris, London or Amsterdam by rail.

**Experts are also present in great numbers**, in 11 forward-looking sectors. Together with entrepreneurs, policy makers and local residents, they form a rock-solid support base for your conference. This ensures that almost the entire society in Flanders is involved in your organization.

This offers your association two crucial advantages. First, your delegates will feel welcome. And second, all factors are present to create a legacy with your conference: a lasting positive impact - not only for your association and your field, but for society itself. Adding value to people's lives – that's the greatest result you can achieve with your conference, isn't it?

Finally, **there is the range of suitable venues**. That's a box you can tick in Flanders too, thanks to the unique network of Flanders Heritage Venues. These conference venues are often located in beautiful heritage sites, have every state-of-the-art facility and are situated in the heart of the historic cities of which Flanders is so proud.

In this e-book, we introduce the Flemish cities and the Flanders Heritage Venues to you. You will notice immediately that with your choice of Flanders, you will welcome your delegates in a beautiful setting for a conference that will be remembered for a long time.

In the name of all the staff at VISIT**FLANDERS** Convention Bureau,
I already extend a warm welcome to your association, your conference and your delegates.

**Evelyn Bardyn**
Head of Convention Bureau

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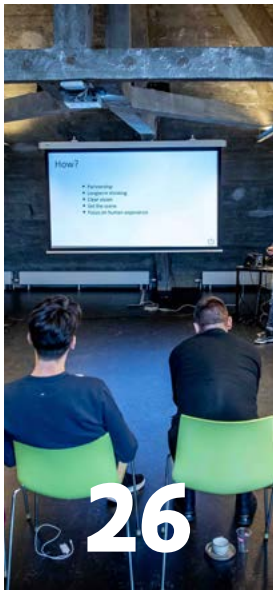
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## OF COURSE, YOUR CONFERENCE IN FLANDERS IS ALSO SUSTAINABLE.

Flanders places a high priority on sustainability and you'll notice that in the conference you organize here. Our region is actively committed to avoiding waste. We provide all the necessary technology to organize your conference hybrid. And many venues cater exclusively with local products.

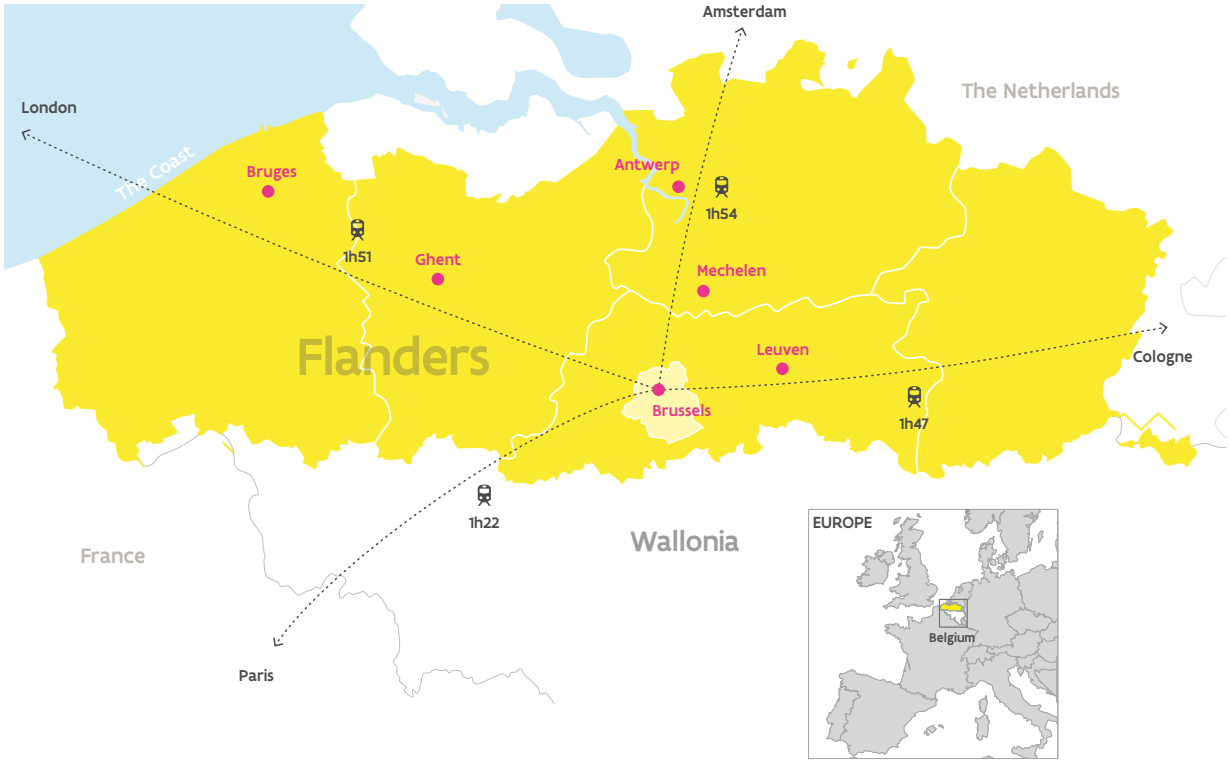
Moreover, a number of our Flanders Heritage Venues have been awarded the famous Green Key certificate, the leading standard for excellence in the field of environmental responsibility and sustainable operation within the tourism industry.

Flanders wants 80% of Flanders Heritage Venues to be Green Key certified by 2035. In the meantime, that ambitious goal might have to be adjusted, as it seems that the quota will be met much earlier....

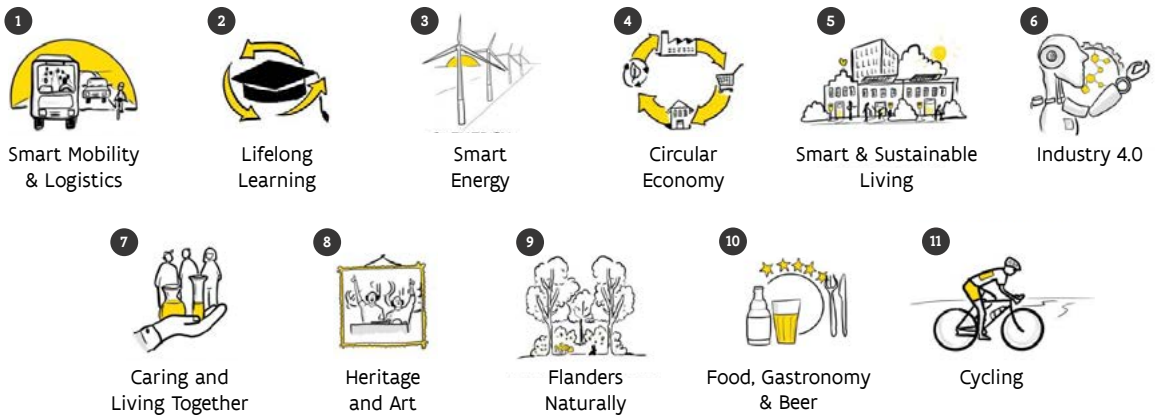
You can read more about these remarkable venues starting on page 28.

# FLANDERS' UNIQUE ASSETS FOR YOUR CONFERENCE

## 1 EASILY ACCESSIBLE, ALSO IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY




## 2 MASSES OF EXPERTISE IN YOUR INDUSTRY, FOR A ROCK-SOLID PROGRAM AND A CAPTIVATED AUDIENCE



© Kris Jacobs

## 3 UNPARALLELED FLANDERS HERITAGE VENUES IN HISTORIC CITIES

Where would you like to welcome your delegates? On the spot where the very first stock exchange in the world was founded? Among lions and tigers? At the top of a hundred-meter-high cathedral? Discover on the following pages which unforgettable experience you can offer your guests, by organizing your conference in a Flanders Heritage Venue in a Flemish city.



© Milo Profi


© Tom D'Haenens

# SMALL CITIES, GREAT EXPERIENCES

## WHAT MAKES FLEMISH CITIES SUCH A GREAT LOCATION FOR YOUR CONFERENCE?

Small cities, great experiences. That perfectly sums up the experience of a Flemish city. There is much to experience in each of the cities, while these experiences are barely a stone's throw from each other. In this regard, the Flemish cities differ thoroughly from cities such as London and Paris, where distances are considerably greater. And despite their proximity to each other and their common history, each city has its own DNA and charm.



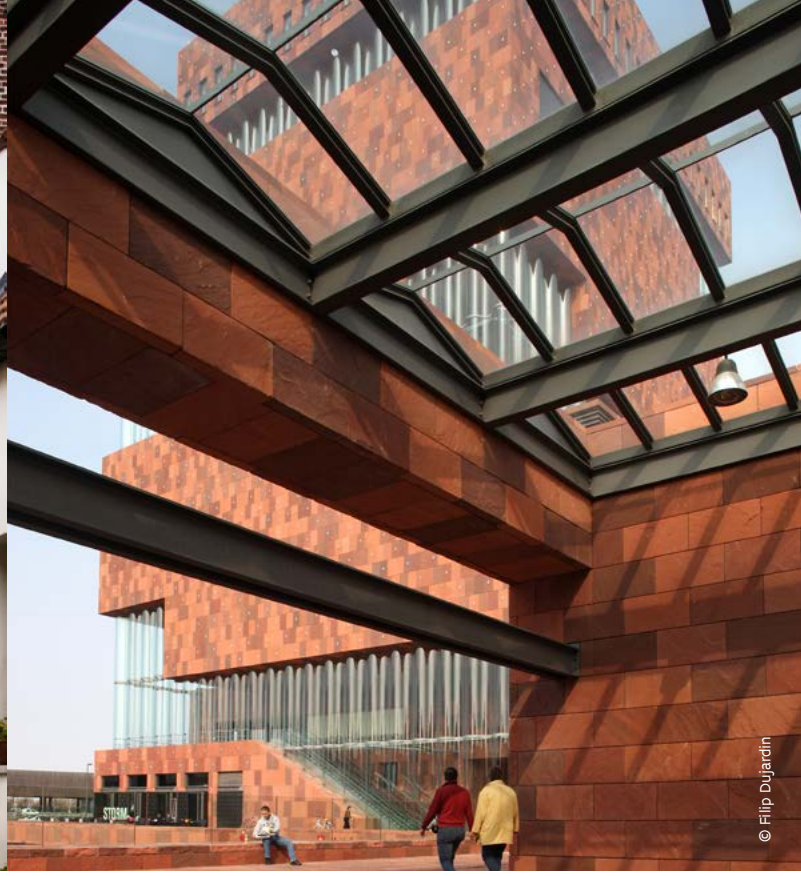
85% of all associations organizing a conference in Flemish cities are **very satisfied**. This high figure is the result of a number of unique assets, which we would like to list for you.

### 1 YOUR DELEGATES ARE IMPRESSED BY THE RICH CULTURAL OFFERINGS.

Flemish cities are centuries old and were among the richest in Europe during the Middle Ages. Their eventful history translates into unique architecture and a magnificent heritage.

Moreover, the strong cultural offer is not limited to the museums, but is also present in activities such as the theater and other performing arts. This assures your delegates a fascinating social program. You






can read more about this on the following pages, where the cities introduce themselves to you.

### 2 YOUR DELEGATES WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO FORGE STRONG BONDS WITH EACH OTHER.

A successful conference is all about connecting. The Flemish cities lend themselves perfectly to this. From your conference venue via the hotels and restaurants to the social program: everything is within walking distance. This invites your delegates to do some sightseeing together or to go out for a meal or a drink. This is how strong ties are forged and the best collaborations can arise.

### 3 YOUR CONFERENCE REAPS THE BENEFITS OF A STRONG LINK TO FLEMISH UNIVERSITIES.

Flemish universities enjoy world fame. Several of them hold a permanent place in the world's top 100. These universities do not remain anchored in their own city, but have branches in different cities all over Flanders. As a result, experts in your field are present in every Flemish city. This is a cast-iron guarantee for a fascinating program of reputable speakers and an interested audience.

### 4 YOU ARE ASSURED OF EXTENSIVE PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT.

Associations that choose to hold a conference in a Flemish city are delighted with the service provided by the local convention bureaus. Their experts are happy to offer you professional support in the organization of your conference and put you in touch with local partners and stakeholders. On the following pages, you will also find the contact details of the local congress bureau.

## FLEMISH CITIES ARE ROLLING OUT THE RED CARPET FOR YOUR ASSOCIATION

The following pages introduce you to 9 unique locations for your conference. You also get 3 suggestions for an exciting social program, which your delegates are sure to talk about for a long time.


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# Antwerp

## VIBRANT HUB OF INNOVATION AND CONFERENCES

Antwerp, a dynamic city only 30 minutes from Brussels Airport, is not only a bustling congress destination, it is also a hub for innovation. As the second-largest port in Europe, it serves as a gateway for global trade and commerce, attracting a diverse range of industries. Additionally, Antwerp has established itself as a leading center for healthcare innovation, fostering groundbreaking research and development.

When it comes to hosting conferences, Flanders Meeting and Convention Centre "Room with a Zoo" (see page 49) steals the spotlight with its unique setting in the Antwerp Zoo. Apart from the convention center, Antwerp offers a range of stunning heritage venues that add a touch of grandeur to any event.

With its perfect blend of historic charm and modern infrastructure - and a total of 6,250 hotel rooms -
Antwerp promises an enriching and inspiring environment for delegates to connect, learn and engage in this vibrant city.

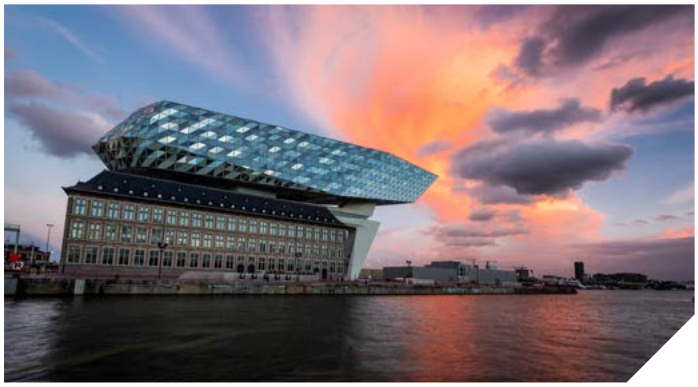
**Would you like more information about your conference in Antwerp?**

**Antwerp Convention Bureau**
www.antwerpconventionbureau.be
+32 3 338.95.83
info@antwerpconventionbureau.be

© Gerd Spinnox

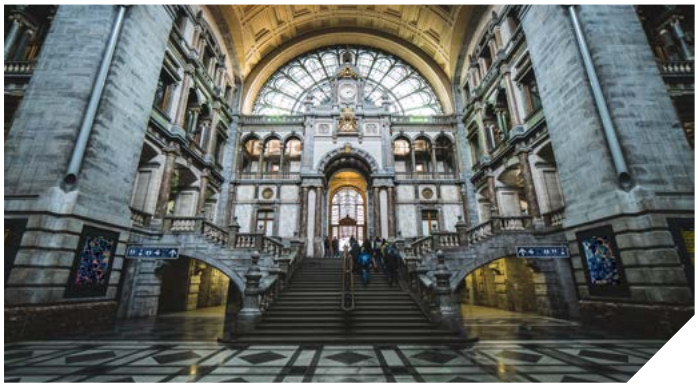


## SUGGESTIONS FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SOCIAL PROGRAM IN ANTWERP



© Lebak Photography

An architectural marvel: Zaha Hadid's **Antwerp Port House**, where visionary design meets the timeless beauty of Antwerp's skyline.



© Lebak Photography

A majestic fusion of history and modernity: **Antwerp Central Station**, an architectural masterpiece that embodies the city's rich heritage and progressive spirit.



© Tom Cornille

The **Antwerp Stock Exchange** (see page 47), an iconic symbol of commerce where historic grandeur harmonizes with the pulse of modern financial markets.

# Bruges



## WHERE HERITAGE MEETS INNOVATION

In the heart of Europe lies a city that combines UNESCO World Heritage with innovation, sustainability and business.

With its compact size and convenient accessibility, Bruges ensures that everything you need is just a stone's throw away. From outstanding conference centers to unique Flanders Heritage Venues – such as Concertgebouw Brugge (see page 36), Bruges Meeting & Convention Centre (see page 37), La Brugeoise (see page 38) and charming hotels with a total of 3,700 rooms, all nestled within its medieval streets, every aspect of your event is within walking distance.

Bruges is also a hub of economic growth in thriving sectors in tourism and culture, healthcare, ICT and mechatronics and the bustling Port of Antwerp-Bruges that offer countless opportunities for collaboration and innovation.

**Would you like more information about your conference in Bruges?**

**Visit Bruges Convention Bureau**
www.visitbrugesconventionbureau.be
+32 50 44 46 66
meeting@brugge.be

# SUGGESTIONS FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SOCIAL PROGRAM IN BRUGES


© Jan D'Hondt

In the historic brewery of **De Halve Maan**, you can enjoy the unfiltered beer brewed on site, the high-quality cuisine or take a tour of the brewing installations. A unique 3276-meter tube pipeline runs from the brewery to the bottling plant outside the city.



**Musea Brugge's thirteen venues** are a real treasure trove. Here, you can admire the world-renowned works of Jan Van Eyck, Hans Memling and other Flemish Masters. The Church of Our Lady houses Michelangelo's world famous "Madonna and Child".


© Iwan Baan

**Bruges Triennial 2024** is a captivating showcase of contemporary visual art and architecture. Every three years, the charming streets of the UNESCO World Heritage City of Bruges transform into an open-air gallery, featuring new, site specific works of talented national and international artists and architects.



# CITY OF TRANSFORMATIONS

Time and again over the past decades, Genk has succeeded in reinventing itself. From the mining industry, via the automotive market to “smart industry 4.0”. Entrepreneurs and researchers put their expertise to use in the fields of care, energy, creativity and biodiversity. Let this - together with the beautiful heritage and green surroundings - be the backdrop for your event, conference, meeting or team building in Genk. With a total of 420 hotel rooms, 70 meeting rooms and 17 event locations - including 3 with the “Flanders Heritage Venue” label - you are guaranteed a top experience.

**Would you like more information about your conference in Genk?**

**Meet in Genk**
www.meetingenk.be
+32 89 65 44 38
meetingenk@genk.be

© Aikon

Genk



# SUGGESTIONS FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SOCIAL PROGRAM IN GENK



**Thor Central** brought prosperity, urban development and energy to the region starting in the 1920s. Today, the former mining site is the beating heart of the Thor Park site, which houses, among other things, a Flanders Heritage Venue (see page 61).




**LABIOMISTA** is an evolving artwork by Koen Vanmechelen about the mix of life. This 24-hectare park is an incubator where humans, animals and nature move together. It is an open-air laboratory that invites your delegates to search for a new future together.




At **C-Mine**, thousands of miners once took the elevator down into the mineshaft to dig up coal 800 meters underground. Today this site - which includes a Flanders Heritage Venue (see page 59) - is an atypical cultural site where architecture and industrial heritage reign supreme.



# Ghent

© VisitGent

## A CONFERENCE CITY ON A HUMAN SCALE

Ghent is a vibrant and accessible conference city at the heart of Flanders, easily reachable from all corners of the world. This compact and sustainable city takes pride in boasting the largest pedestrian area in Belgium, ensuring that all hotels (with a total of 3,000 rooms), venues, cultural attractions and shopping facilities are conveniently within walking distance.

With over 72,000 students studying here, Ghent has earned the title of the largest university town in Flanders. This influx of students infuses the city with a youthful and lively vibe, making it a dynamic place both day and night.

Ghent prides itself on being a hospitable and historically rich city and also has a strong focus on sustainability and innovation. This harmonious blend makes it an ideal destination for conferences of all sizes. In Ghent, you'll find a city that offers everything on a human scale, making it a warm and inviting place to host your next event.

**Would you like more information about your conference in Ghent?**

**GentCongres**
www.gentcongres.be
+32 9 266 56 52
gentcongres@stad.gent

## SUGGESTIONS FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SOCIAL PROGRAM IN GHENT


© Tom D'Haenens

**The Castle of the Counts** is the only remaining medieval castle with a moat and largely intact defense system in Flanders. Honestly, you can't find a more exciting place for your conference dinner, right?


© Kevin Faingaert

As a **city of water**, Ghent offers your delegates a unique experience: to explore the old city center by boat. You can even surprise your delegates with a boat trip from their hotel to the conference venue and back, adding an unforgettable touch of charm to their stay.


© Art in Flanders, Dominique Provoost

In Sint-Bavo's Cathedral, you can admire the **Ghent Altarpiece** by Hubert and Jan Van Eyck. This impressive painting, which was revealed in 1432, is praised as one of the most influential paintings in the world.

# Hasselt





## OFFER YOUR GUESTS MORE THAN A CONFERENCE

Hasselt is the perfect location as the hub for your conference. Good taste, nature, music, knowledge, art; Hasselt has it all. It's the perfect base to offer your guests more than a conference.

For years, Hasselt has been known as the "Capital of Good Taste", where fashion, contemporary art and gastronomy are reason enough to make you want to visit the city.

Hasselt is also a meeting point for knowledge, scientific research, start-ups and innovation. The compact city is easily reachable by public transport (a 50-minute direct train ride from Brussels Airport) and once you arrive, everything is within walking distance. All hotels (with a total of 730 rooms), conference venues, restaurants and social activities are all just a very short distance from each other.

The compactness of the city ensures that congress participants will inevitably run into each other. As a result, you get the feeling that the city is one big congress venue!

**Would you like more information about your conference in Hasselt?**

**Meet in Hasselt**
www.meetinhasselt.be
+32 11 23 96 67
meet@hasselt.be

## SUGGESTIONS FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SOCIAL PROGRAM IN HASSELT



The **Japanese Garden** is the largest in Western Europe. It makes a very special location for your welcome reception. Or why not start the day for your delegates with a tai chi session in the morning?



Jump on a bike for a guided team trip to explore the region, such as **"Cycle through Water"** in Bokrijk or at the Herkenrode Abbey Site. All of these locations are surrounded by beautiful green nature, offering many one-of-a-kind options for your conference meetings.



A visit to the **Jenevermuseum** puts your senses on edge: you see, hear and experience the passion for the age-old but still very much alive jenever heritage with scent installations, film clips, sound clips and, last but not least, an extensive collection.

# ENJOY THE CREATIVE VIBE IN A CITY FULL OF WONDERS

Kortrijk combines the allure of a big city with small-town cosiness. Discover the wide range of unique assets Kortrijk has to offer as a creative venue for events with a long-lasting impact. Our medium-sized city along the river Leie has been part of the UNESCO network of creative cities since 2017.

Kortrijk earned a quality label as a global player in creative design and innovative manufacturing industry. The Digital Arts & Education Degree by Howest College in Kortrijk is ranked highest in the world by professionals both local and abroad.

Kortrijk seamlessly blends a forward-thinking vision of the future with an unforgettable past, creating an unparalleled experience. Your delegates will be impressed by the astonishing heritage buildings, some of which have UNESCO recognition, such as the Beguinage, the Town Hall, the Belfry and the Broel Towers.

At the heart of the historic city center, pedestrians and cyclists rule. Your delegates can reach the entire city center in just 15 minutes without encountering any traffic jams. Despite its cozy size, Kortrijk offers over 40,000 square meters of space for congresses and events, and a total of 2,000 hotel rooms.

Kortrijk benefits from a central location in Flanders with easy access by train, car as well as airplane. It will take you only a 40 (Lille) or 60 minutes (Brussels) drive by car to get from the airport to the city centre.

Are you excited to organize your next event in Kortrijk? Let us help you plan it! Contact us for assistance.

**Would you like more information about your conference in Kortrijk?**

**Meet in Kortrijk Convention Bureau**
www.meetinkortrijk.be
+32 489 39 96 98
meetinkortrijk@kortrijk.be

# Kortrijk

## SUGGESTIONS FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SOCIAL PROGRAM IN KORTRIJK



For centuries, the Leie River has brought prosperity and creativity to the city of Kortrijk. Today, the river connects many surprising places created by insightful and top-notch architectural city planning. An extensive variety of shops and businesses highlight the city's creative character.



If you're looking for excellent fine dining options for your delegates, you're in luck! The city boasts numerous restaurants with excellent Gault & Millau ratings.



The Belfry - UNESCO World Heritage - is a medieval bell tower located in the historical centre. In Church of Our Lady, built in the 13th century, your delegates will not only discover a masterpiece by Anthony Van Dyck, they can also visit the museum dedicated to the great battle of 1302, the victory of Flanders over France.



© Rob Stevens

# Leuven

## THE PERFECT BLEND OF INNOVATION AND CULTURE

The dynamic city of Leuven is home to Europe's most innovative university. KU Leuven boasts six centuries of groundbreaking research and top-tier education. Located centrally in Europe, it is a mere 15 minutes from Brussels National Airport, offering excellent accessibility by car or public transport.

Leuven stands as a prime region for health, high-tech and creativity, with state-of-the-art hospitals, thriving research-industry collaborations and a blossoming creative ecosystem. As one of Europe's most innovative and sustainable cities, it is renowned for hosting green events.

Your delegates immerse themselves in a vibrant student city, with over 100,000 inhabitants and a whopping 57,000 students, creating a lively and spirited atmosphere. The rich beer culture with 240 pubs adds to the city's allure. Its centuries-old cultural heritage is another special asset that makes Leuven an excellent choice for your next conference. The city has a total of 1,100 hotel rooms available for your delegates.

**Would you like more information about your conference in Leuven?**

**Leuven Convention Bureau**
www.leuvenconventionbureau.be
+32 16 37 38 00
info@leuvenconventionbureau.be





# SUGGESTIONS FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SOCIAL PROGRAM IN LEUVEN




Your delegates will definitely be impressed by **Leuven's Grand-Place**. There, they can admire the most beautiful town hall façade in the world. In St. Peter's Church - a highlight of Brabant High Gothic - hangs the Last Supper, a masterpiece by Dieric Bouts.




**Park Abbey** - a vibrant heritage site in the midst of lush greenery - is one of the best-preserved abbeys in Europe. Also be sure to visit the Great Beguinage, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.




Leuven is the world capital of beer. During the interactive tour of **Stella Artois**, your delegates will see the brewery in full action and then enjoy a freshly tapped Stella afterward. Microbrewery De Coureur is also well worth a visit.



# Mechelen

## A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE GEM WELCOMES YOUR CONFERENCE

Due to its central location – halfway between Antwerp and Brussels – this city on the river Dyle is an excellent base for meetings and conferences. It takes just 11 minutes to get to the city from Brussels National Airport. And it's only a short drive from Belgium's neighbouring countries.

Here, old and new live in harmony. Just like work and pleasure. Forget dull conferences and meetings. Invite your delegates for an original team building activity in one of the most beautiful libraries in the world (the Predikheren, see page 52), in the former brewery of Lamot (see page 53) or in Martin's Patershof, a converted church with stunning architectural features. Let them sleep in a former church or hospital, in a brewery, in a spa hotel that was once a fish smokery and cigarette factory, in what used to be the most popular swimming pool in the city or in one of the 750 other hotel rooms the city provides for your delegations.

How about exploring Mechelen before or after your event? Travel back in time as you walk through narrow streets and past historic buildings. Mechelen is home to an amazing 336 listed buildings and monuments, including eight gothic and baroque churches that were built between the 14th and the 17th century. As such, it is the Flemish city with the largest number of monuments on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Not surprising, when you know that during the Burgundian period (late 15th, early 16th century), Mechelen was the capital of the Netherlands.

Are your delegates getting hungry? They will certainly enjoy the taste of Mechelen in the many charming pubs and restaurants, bustling squares and lively café terraces.

**Would you like more information about your conference in Mechelen?**

**Meet in Mechelen**
www.meetinmechelen.be
+32 15 29 89 21
meetinmechelen@mechelen.be

## SUGGESTIONS FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SOCIAL PROGRAM IN MECHELEN


© Visit Mechelen - Aikon

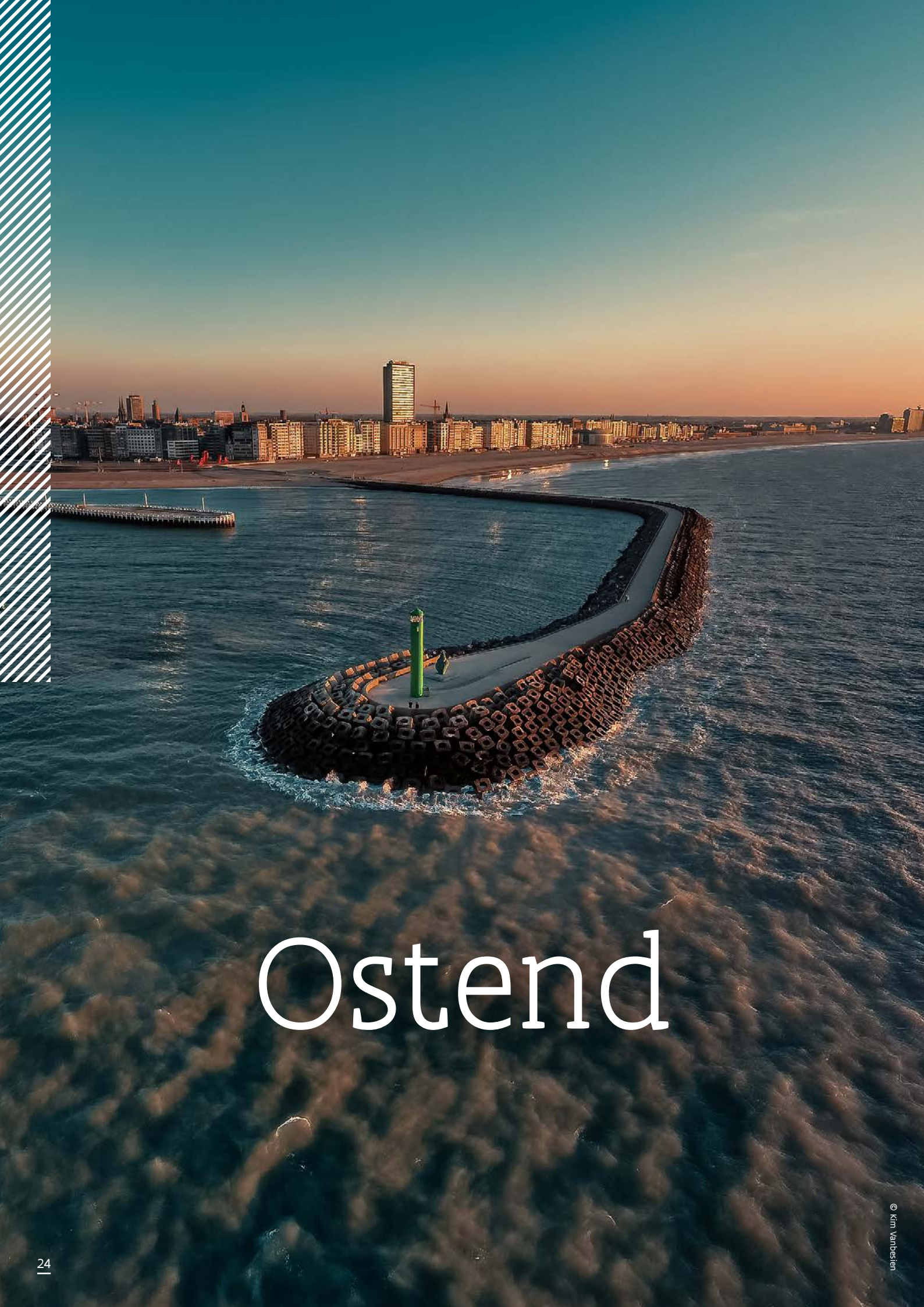
On top of the 97-meter-high **St Rumbold's Tower** – recognized as UNESCO world heritage – your delegates are welcome for an unforgettable reception with a view of the city.


© Karin Borghouts

The **Predikheren Public Library**, located in a former monastery, is Mechelen's cultural hotspot. The library is one of the five most beautiful in the world.



One of the most amazing discoveries during your stroll through the city: the 16th century houses on the **Haverwerf**, considered by many as the most beautiful facades in Flanders.



# Ostend

© Kim Vanbesien

## THE CONGRESS CITY BY THE SEA

With Ostend, you combine the best of both worlds. You will find not only state-of-the art conference and meeting facilities, but also the sea and the best that nature has to offer.

It is well known that sea air inspires. Big names such as James Ensor and Marvin Gaye found their inspiration in Ostend. With a conference in Ostend, you will experience for yourself how the sea can be a source of inspiration.

Your delegates are welcome in two Flanders Heritage Venues right in the city center: Kursaal Ostend (see page 34) and De Grote Post (see page 35). All hotels (with a total of 2,000 rooms), restaurants and other attractions are within walking.

Ostend is also a very accessible city. There are no fewer than three airports nearby: Ostend itself, Lille and Brussels National. From the local train station, you can be at your conference venue within a 15-minute walk.

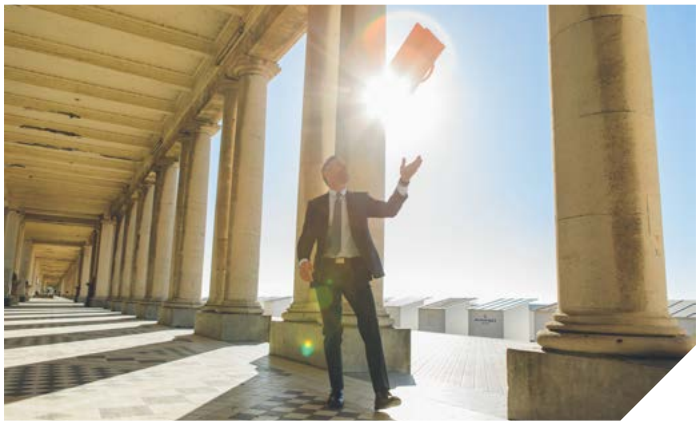
**Would you like more information about your conference in Ostend?**

**Meet in Oostende**
www.meetinoostende.be
+32 59 25 53 17
info@meetinoostende.be

## SUGGESTIONS FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SOCIAL PROGRAM IN OSTEND



At the **James Ensor House**, you dive into Ensor's eventful life and influential body of art. You can also visit the house where he lived and worked until his death in 1949.



A highlight of your social program: a walk with your delegates along the **seawall** and the **Western Breakwater**, where you literally walk into the sea.




Would you like things to be a little more adventurous? Then take a cruise through the harbor with your delegates. Or even more spectacular: set course for the **wind farms** in the sea.

*To define a rock-solid legacy for your conference, you benefit from the support of VISIT**FLANDERS** Convention Bureau and the Legacy Makers.*

# WHO COMES, STAYS

## WHY YOUR CONFERENCE WILL LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY IN FLANDERS

Your conference can be so much more than an annual gathering for your delegates. Your association can use this key meeting to initiate positive changes that have a lasting positive impact on society.




**GEMMEKE DE JONGH**
**LEGACY EXPERT**

gemmeke.dejongh@meetinflanders.com
+32 2 504 03 78


That's how your association builds its legacy. And Flanders is happy to put its shoulder to the wheel. Our region gladly rolls out the red carpet for your conference.

We do this with a unique service in which VISIT**FLANDERS** Convention Bureau defines and develops the legacy of your conference together with you. In doing so, we also call upon the expertise of the Legacy Makers: renowned scientists, entrepreneurs and policy makers from Flanders who are happy to share their insights with you.

Flanders offers this service free of charge when you organize your conference in one of the Flemish cities.

**This legacy service is carried out according to a specially developed methodology, consisting of four phases:**

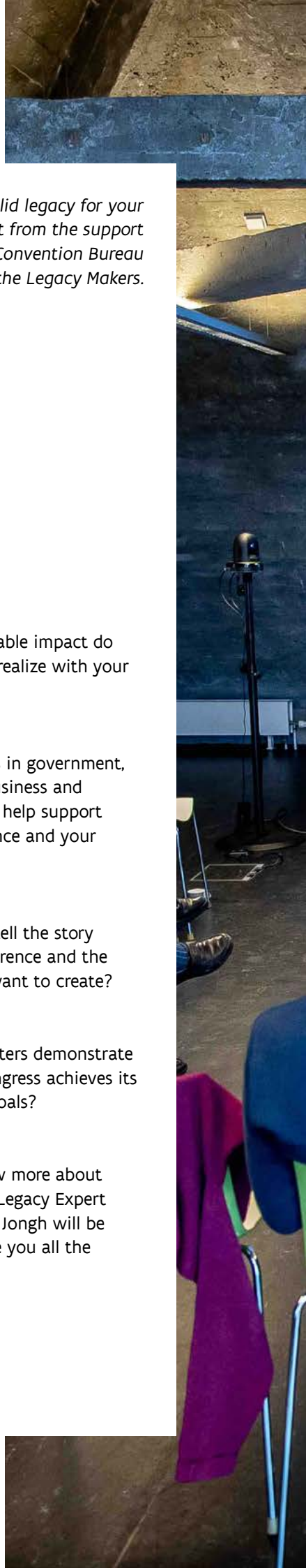
**PHASE 1**
what sustainable impact do you want to realize with your conference?

**PHASE 2**
which parties in government, education, business and residents can help support your conference and your legacy?

**PHASE 3**
how do you tell the story of your conference and the impact you want to create?

**PHASE 4**
what parameters demonstrate that your congress achieves its sustainable goals?

Want to know more about this service? Legacy Expert Gemmeke De Jongh will be happy to give you all the explanations.






© Thomas De Boever


Dirk Verbrugge

# THE FLANDERS HERITAGE VENUES NETWORK

## CREATING EXTRAORDINARY EVENTS THROUGH THE POWER OF CONTEXT



**SAM VERSELE,**
VISIT**FLANDERS**
venue expert

This article is based on a lecture given by Sam Versele at the Legacy Makers Event on June 15, 2023. During these Legacy Makers Events, leading researchers, entrepreneurs and policy makers from Flanders come together to see how they can help support the legacy of your conference. You can read more about this service, which Flanders offers free of charge to your association, on the previous page.

It's incredible to witness the diverse range of emotions and connections that places can evoke within all of us. These shared experiences remind us of the profound impact that context can have on our perceptions, our decisions and our sense of purpose.

ORGANIZING YOUR CONFERENCE IN THE RIGHT CONTEXT CAN HAVE A PROFOUND IMPACT ON ITS OUTCOMES.

Research conducted by Dr. Robert Cialdini - a renowned social psychologist - reveals fascinating insights into the power of context. When people are surrounded by a compelling environment that resonates with their goals and values, they become more engaged, inspired and inclined to make sound decisions.

When participants step into a Flanders Heritage Venue, they are transported to a place where history, culture and innovation converge. These venues, with their unique and heritage-based settings, offer an unparalleled backdrop for your international conference or event.

Exposure to historic and heritage elements triggers positive emotions and stimulates creative thinking.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS THE ADVANTAGES OF ORGANIZING EVENTS IN SUCH REMARKABLE VENUES.

Scientific facts and figures show that your delegates' cognitive abilities are enhanced when they are exposed to aesthetically pleasing and inspiring surroundings.

Studies conducted by Dr. Joye, a leading expert in environmental psychology, indicate that exposure to historic and heritage elements triggers positive emotions and stimulates creative thinking. By immersing your delegates in the rich heritage of Flanders, you ignite their imagination and foster an environment conducive to innovation and problem-solving.

Much attention is also paid to sustainability, delivering an unprecedented experience, before, during and after the event.

Furthermore, when participants feel a strong emotional connection to their surroundings, their level of engagement skyrockets. Research by Professor Robin Dunbar, an evolutionary psychologist, proved that shared experiences in inspiring environments strengthen social bonds and enhance cooperation. By organizing your conference in a Flanders Heritage Venue, you create a sense of shared history, enabling delegates to forge meaningful connections and collaborate more effectively.

## THE NETWORK OF FLANDERS HERITAGE VENUES INCLUDES 31 EXTRAORDINARY VENUES.

Each of these venues meets the most stringent requirements in quality, sustainability, experience and digital innovation. Each location is carefully selected to offer a truly unforgettable experience. From majestic castles to converted industrial spaces, Flanders Heritage Venues encompass the diversity of our region's heritage.

These venues serve as a testament to our rich past while embracing the future. We do that by monitoring, developing and redefining international quality standards. At the same time, we ensure that every venue respects its visitors, but also its residents, entrepreneurs and the place itself. Much attention is also paid to sustainability, delivering an unprecedented experience, before, during and after the event.

## SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE TOMORROW'S HERITAGE.

At VISIT**FLANDERS** Convention Bureau, we believe that the true value of organizing your conference in a Flanders Heritage Venue lies in the opportunity to create tomorrow's heritage. By bringing together academics, industry leaders and visionaries in these extraordinary settings, your association amplifies the impact of their work. You pave the way for groundbreaking ideas and decisions that will shape the future. Not only of your field or discipline, but also of the society in which your association operates.

The slogan "Create Tomorrow's Heritage" embodies the mission your association and Flanders share: to leave a lasting legacy through the organization of meaningful conferences and events. It emphasizes our mutual commitment to fostering an environment that transcends the present, inspiring innovation and progress for generations to come.

Context setting has an undeniable impact on the success of your conference. By welcoming your delegates to a Flanders Heritage Venue, you harness the power of historic significance, captivating surroundings and shared experiences. You provide your participants with an environment that stimulates engagement, inspiration and wise decision-making.

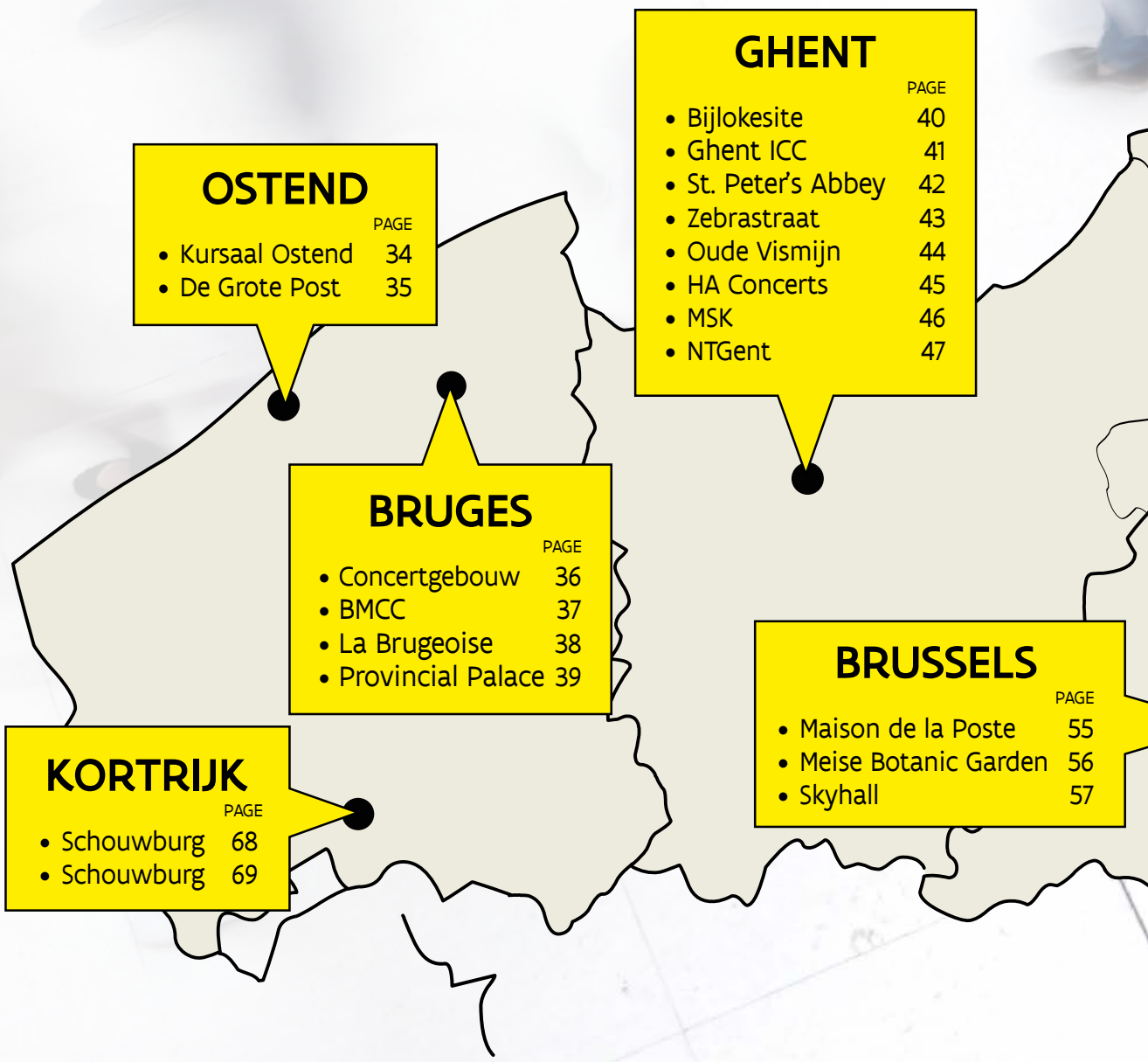
**Would you like more information about the Flanders Heritage Venues? Sam Versele is happy to give you further explanation.**

**SAM VERSELE**
sam.versele@meetinflanders.com
+32 470 99 64 09



# The Flanders Heritage Venues network

DISCOVER 28 EXTRAORDINARY VENUES FOR A TRULY UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE



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VISITFLANDERS

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## EXTRAORDINARY HERITAGE BUILDING WITH SEA VIEWS

Kursaal is a highly multifunctional building with a wide array of rooms for your conference. Everywhere you look in this listed building you see art, for instance by the renowned Belgian surrealist Paul Delvaux. Good to know: along one side of the Kursaal your delegates will step into the bustling city, along the other side they will walk directly onto the beach.

www.kursaal-oostende.be

Capacity: up to 3,500 pax

Concert hall, plenary rooms & break-out rooms



# Kursaal Ostend




# De Grote Post

## A SEA OF POSSIBILITIES

De Grote Post is a gem of postwar modernist architecture, which - as its name suggests - served for decades as a post office. In 2012, the building was opened as the new cultural beacon of the city of Ostend. Today, De Grote Post is a vibrant place where audiences, artists and your delegates meet.

www.degrotepost.be

Capacity: up to 400 pax

4 plenary rooms +
10 break-out rooms

# Concertgebouw Brugge

## THE PERFECT SCENE FOR YOUR CONFERENCE

Ever since its opening in 2002, Concertgebouw Brugge has been an icon. Its striking architecture, fantastic acoustics and extensive art collection make it a state-of-the-art location for your conference. You welcome your guests in unique rooms, such as the Concert Hall, the Chamber Music Hall and the Angel Room, featuring the fresco by renowned artist Luc Tuymans.

www.concertgebouw.be

Capacity: up to 1,200 pax

Concert Hall, Chamber Music Hall, foyers, break-out rooms and a roof top terrace

© Jan Darthet

# Bruges Meeting & Convention Centre



## A LANDMARK FOR THE CITY

The BMCC was designed by architect Eduardo Souto de Moura, whom Barack Obama presented with the prestigious Pritzker architecture prize. Here, you receive your delegates in the heart of the historic city center, recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage site. The impressive 4,500m² ground floor is perfect for trade fairs, larger public events and concerts.

www.bmccbruges.com

Capacity: up to 2,500 pax

Multifunctional hall, plenary room, spacious foyer, 12 meeting rooms and catering area with terrace and auditorium for 516 pax

This venue has received the Green Key sustainability certification.

Green Key

© Filip Dujardin



# La Brugeoise

## RARE INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE FOR A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE

Here you welcome your delegates to a unique location: rare industrial heritage from the early 1900s. The historic turbine hall and transformer room of the original metal company have been transformed into venues for an unforgettable seminar or conference. The location of La Brugeoise is also unique: surrounded by greenery, yet close to Bruges' train station.

www.labrugeoise.be

Capacity: up to 700 pax

2 spaces for 400 and 700 guests, 2 gardens

# Provincial Palace

## LENDING CLASS TO EVERY EVENT

The Provincial Palace is an imposing, yet charming building that will lend class to every event. The interior is richly decorated with coats of arms, medallions, stained-glass windows, statues, paintings, and banners. Here you will welcome your delegates in one of the most desirable locations in one of most cherished cities in the world.

www.visitbrugesconvention-bureau.be/en/locations/provincial-palace

Capacity: up to 220 pax

plenary room, forum,
5 break-out rooms



© Jan Darthet

# Bijloke site



## IN THE HEART OF EUROPE'S BEST KEPT SECRET

The Bijloke site dates back to 1228, making it one of the oldest hospitals in Europe. This conference venue has plenty of special rooms on offer, like the medieval Main Hall, the Anatomical Theatre and the 18th-century Baudelo room. The venue is located close to the city center of Ghent, an amazing city called "Europe's best kept secret" by Lonely Planet.

www.bijloke.be/en/pQ0B7CM/congress---events

Capacity: up to 500 pax

7 meeting rooms, 2 break out rooms, suite and foyer

# Ghent International Congress Centre



## A 15-HECTARE GREEN HAVEN IN THE BUSY CITY OF GHENT

Flanders is proud of its prized age-old buildings, but it also has excellent contemporary architecture. When the ICC was constructed in the 1970s, it was an avant-garde, forward-looking building. Today, the Ghent International Congress Centre is reinventing itself as an Urban Green House, with the restored Floralies Hall as its magnificent centerpiece.

www.iccghent.com

Capacity: up to 3,000 pax

+25 all-purpose room

This venue has received the Green Key sustainability certification.

Green Key

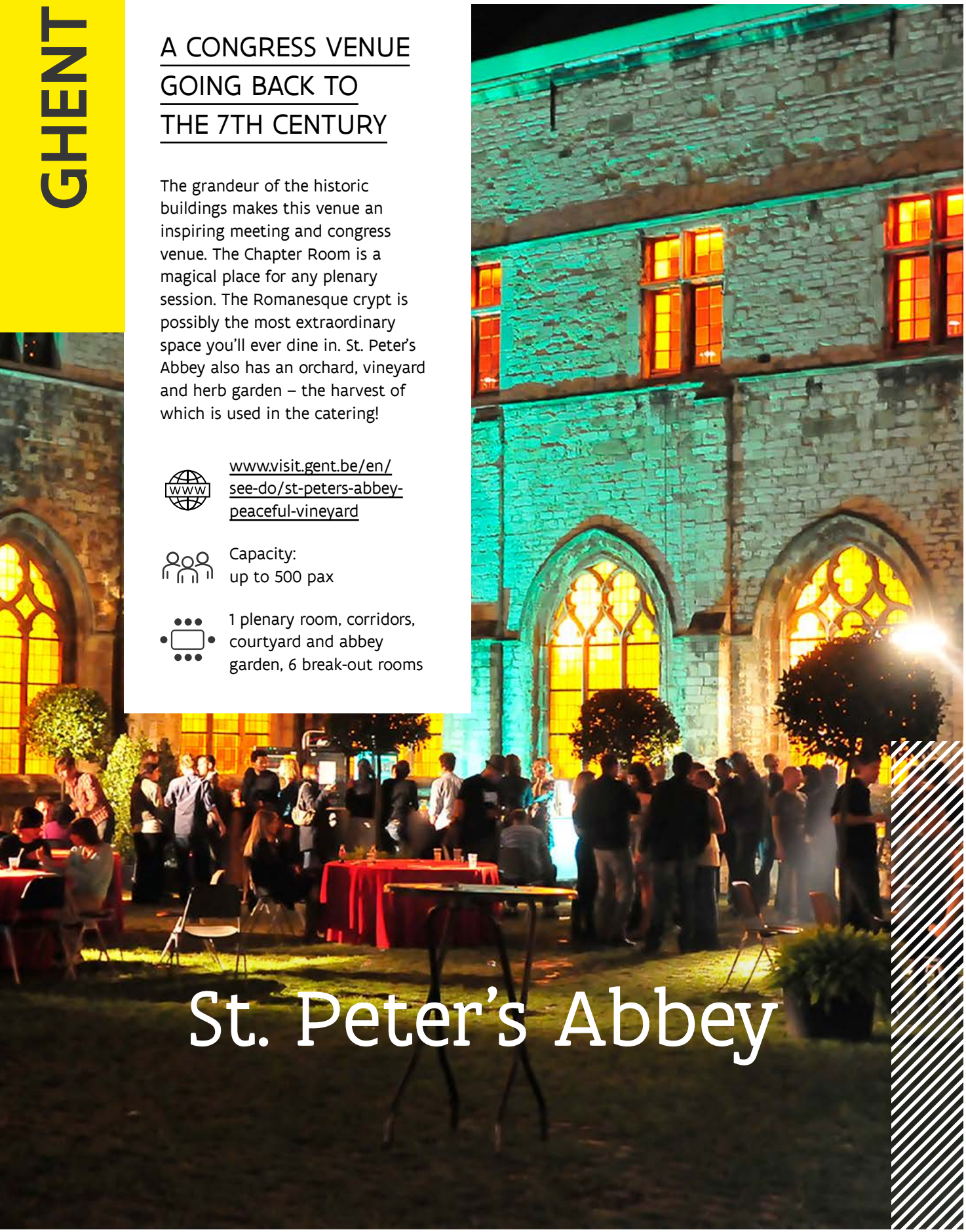
## A CONGRESS VENUE GOING BACK TO THE 7TH CENTURY

The grandeur of the historic buildings makes this venue an inspiring meeting and congress venue. The Chapter Room is a magical place for any plenary session. The Romanesque crypt is possibly the most extraordinary space you'll ever dine in. St. Peter's Abbey also has an orchard, vineyard and herb garden – the harvest of which is used in the catering!

www.visit.gent.be/en/see-do/st-peters-abbey-peaceful-vineyard

Capacity:
up to 500 pax

1 plenary room, corridors, courtyard and abbey garden, 6 break-out rooms



# St. Peter's Abbey




## LOCALS WELCOME YOUR CONFERENCE

Vibrant. That's the best way to describe the Zebrastraat in one word. Your delegates are guests here at a location where people also live, in perfectly preserved working-class houses. Add to that the impressive art collection and you will understand: the Zebrastraat guarantees an unforgettable conference. Also good to know: until 1902, a zoo stood here...

www.zebrastraat.be

Capacity: up to 220 pax

2 plenary rooms,
8 break-out rooms

© Vicky Spaenhoven



# Oude Vismijn

## A PRIME LOCATION IN THE HISTORIC CENTER OF GHENT

Here, your conference will be hosted in a historic location: one of the oldest markets in Ghent, in the heart of the medieval city center. Your delegates will definitely notice this rich history upon arrival, as the entrance to de Oude Vismijn - the Old Fish Market - is located next to the impressive Castle of the Counts. The 4 interconnected halls offer room for 100 to 1,400 people.

www.oudevismijn.be

Capacity: up to 1,400 pax

4 plenary rooms,
6 break-out rooms



# Ha Concerts

## A RICH HISTORY GUARANTEES A HISTORIC CONFERENCE

This magnificent building was first a Guild Hall, then a Post Hotel, then a Trade Exchange and finally a Concert Hall. Because of this rich history, Ha Concerts is at home in many markets. Your association is welcome here for conferences, seminars and trade shows, as well as performances, lectures, receptions and workshops.

www.haconcerts.be/en/hall-rental

Capacity: up to 350 pax

Concert Hall, Foyer, 3 break-out rooms

This venue has received the Green Key sustainability certification.

Green Key



# MSK Gent

© Martin Corlazzoli

## WHERE ART CONNECTS AND INSPIRES PEOPLE

The MSK or Museum of Fine Arts in Ghent is the oldest museum in Belgium. Admiration and wonder, reflection and debate are central here. This inviting place welcomes your delegates in a unique architectural setting. The visual arts promote a lasting connection, guaranteeing an unforgettable experience for your conference.

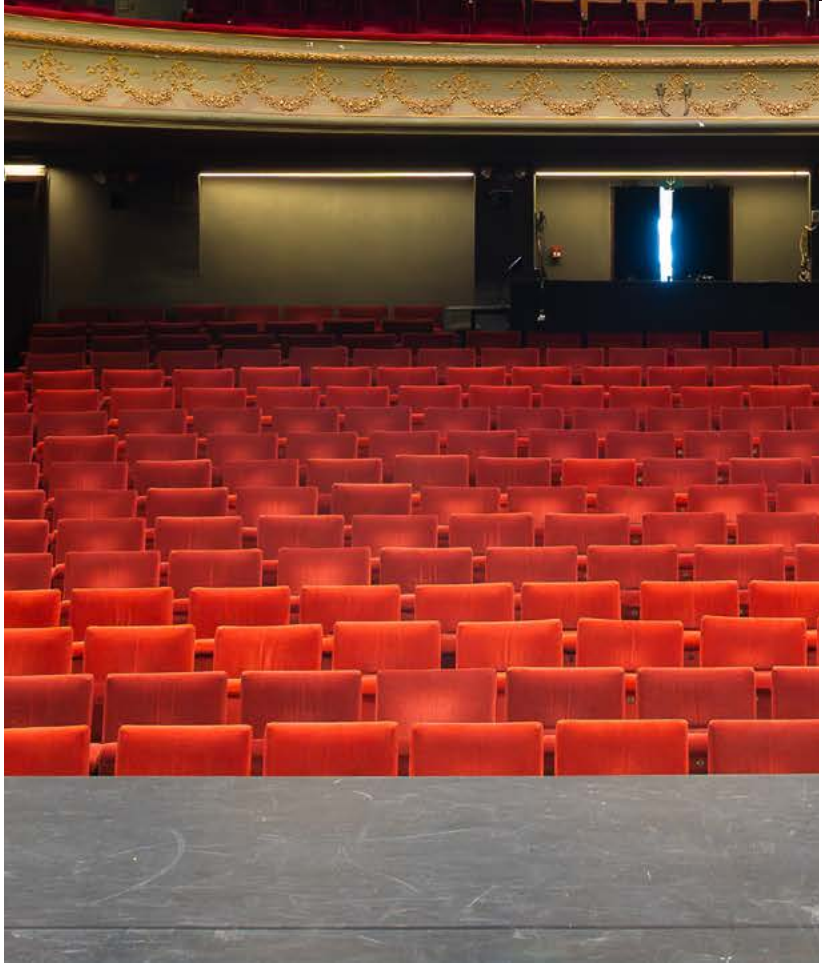
www.mskgent.be

Capacity: up to 600 pax

1 plenary room, 6 break-out rooms, 2 terraces



# NTGent



## PUT YOUR CONFERENCE CENTRE STAGE

NTGent welcomes your delegates beneath balconies, chandeliers and rows of red velvet seats. The 19th-century city theatre combines historic grandeur with fully renovated sound, lighting and projection facilities. Its stately foyer and spacious terrace provide an impressive setting for receptions, with views of the Belfry and Saint Bavo's Cathedral. Step outside and the historic city becomes part of your conference experience.

www.ntgent.be/en

Capacity:
up to 450 pax

Theatre, foyer, café, terrace & extensive backstage facilities

# Antwerp Stock Exchange

## THE WORLD'S FIRST STOCK EXCHANGE

This place wrote world history. In 1520, the world's first stock exchange opened here. Today, everything at Antwerp Stock Exchange - from meeting infrastructure to high-class catering - is focused on quality. Your delegates are sure to be impressed by the opulent neo-Gothic building with its impressive 19th-century canopy of iron and glass.

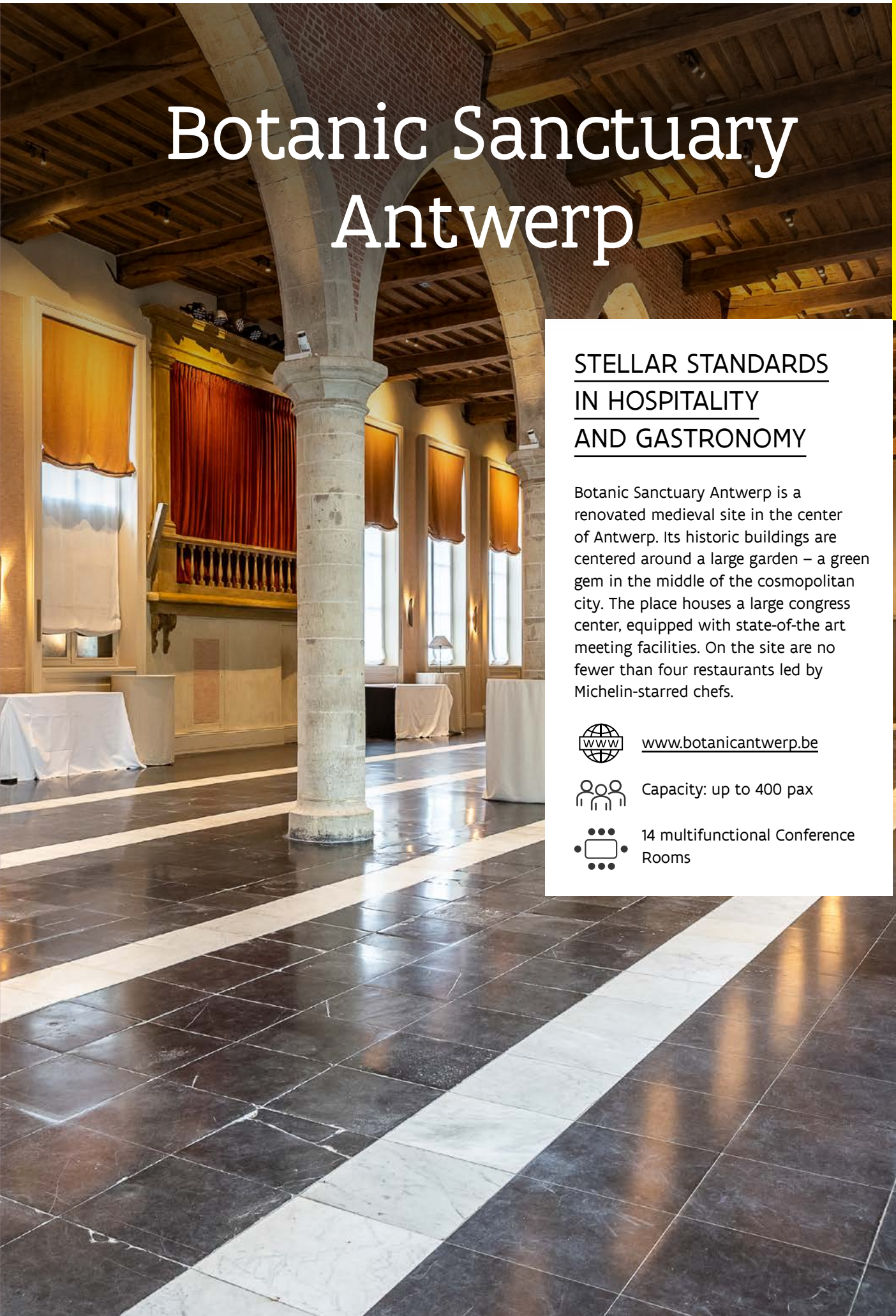
www.handelsbeursantwerpen.be/en

Capacity:
up to 1,200 pax

10 multifunctional meeting rooms and break-out rooms



# Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp



## STELLAR STANDARDS IN HOSPITALITY AND GASTRONOMY

Botanic Sanctuary Antwerp is a renovated medieval site in the center of Antwerp. Its historic buildings are centered around a large garden – a green gem in the middle of the cosmopolitan city. The place houses a large congress center, equipped with state-of-the art meeting facilities. On the site are no fewer than four restaurants led by Michelin-starred chefs.

www.botanicantwerp.be

Capacity: up to 400 pax

14 multifunctional Conference Rooms

# Flanders Meeting & Convention Center Antwerp (FMCCA)



## A ROOM WITH A ZOO

If you choose this venue for your next meeting or conference, you're in for a unique experience. As the FMCCA is part of the Antwerp ZOO, you welcome your delegates among the lions and tigers. You also support nature and biodiversity: all revenues are used to foster animal welfare, nature education and awareness-raising.

www.aroomwithazoo.com

Capacity: up to 1,800 pax

19 multifunctional conference rooms and 30 break-out rooms

This venue has received the Green Key sustainability certification.

Green Key

# Horta Antwerp



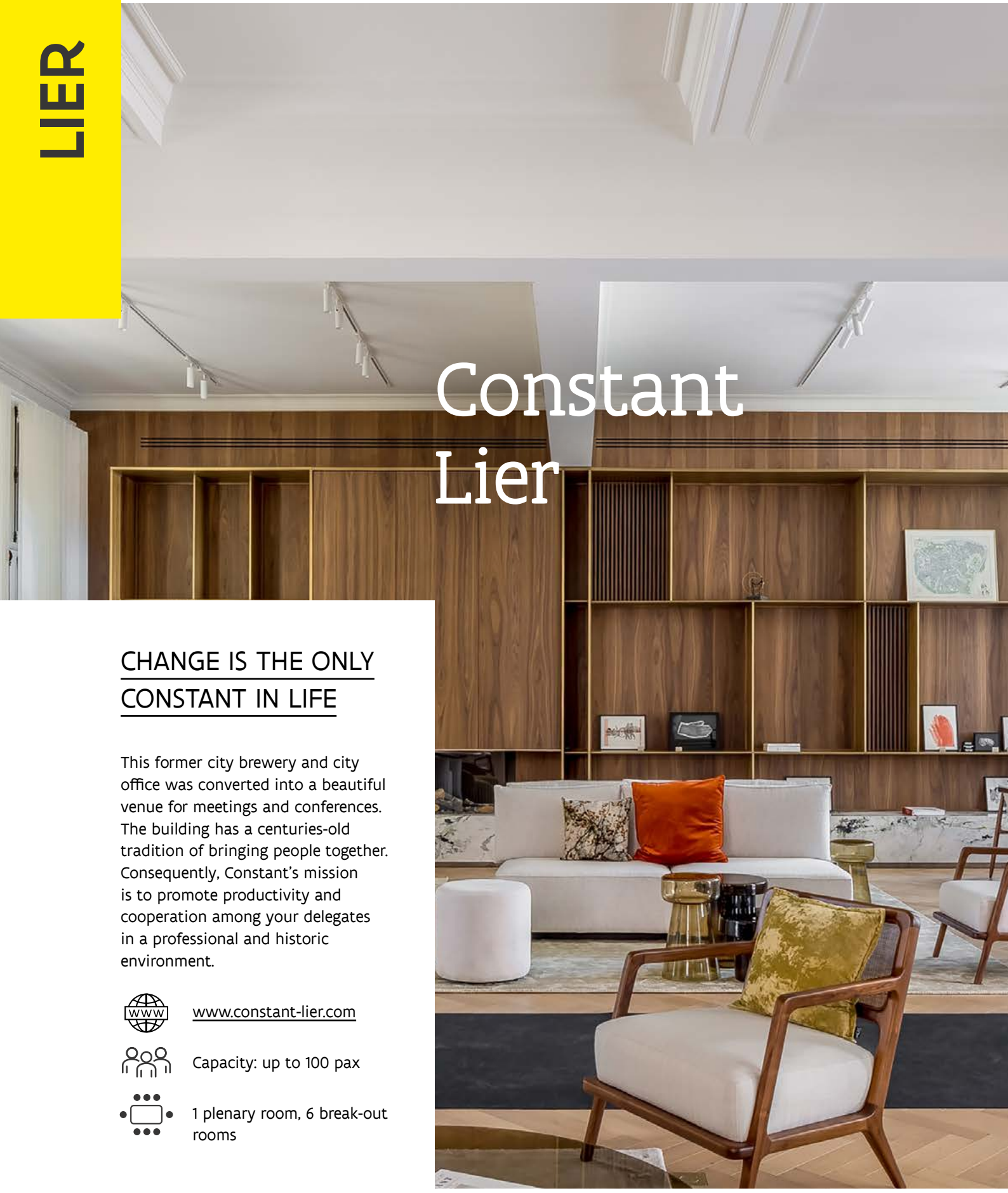
## YOUR CONFERENCE IN AN ARCHITECTURAL MASTERPIECE

Situated between the theatre district, the busy Meir and the trendy Schuttershofstraat, the monumental Art Nouveau Hall provides the ideal venue for a wide range of events. This venue pays homage to an architectural masterpiece, as it is decorated with the original iron rafters designed by famous Art Nouveau architect Victor Horta.

www.grandcafehorta.be/en

Capacity: up to 800 pax

1 plenary room



# Constant Lier

## CHANGE IS THE ONLY CONSTANT IN LIFE

This former city brewery and city office was converted into a beautiful venue for meetings and conferences. The building has a centuries-old tradition of bringing people together. Consequently, Constant's mission is to promote productivity and cooperation among your delegates in a professional and historic environment.

www.constant-lier.com

Capacity: up to 100 pax

1 plenary room, 6 break-out rooms

## A PLACE FULL OF LIFE AND STORIES

Het Predikheren, a captivating blend of history and modernity, offers an enchanting setting. Its well-preserved monastery tells three centuries of stories. The city library, with its vast book collection, invites relaxation and immersion. As a Flanders Heritage Venue, it promises an inspiring backdrop for unforgettable events. Top restaurant Tinèlle's catering adds a culinary dimension, enhancing your experience.

www.hetpredikheren.be

Capacity:
up to 140 pax

5 meeting rooms



# Het Predikheren




## AN INSPIRING PLACE WITH A HISTORY OF DARING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BOLD IDEAS

This characterful conference venue is located in a brewery that dates back almost 400 years. When renovating the complex, the architects added a striking glass volume that gives the old building a new lease of life. Here's a great tip: organize your welcome reception on top of the medieval Sint-Rombouts cathedral tower and enjoy its breath-taking views..

www.lamot-mechelen.be

Capacity: up to 480 pax

auditorium + 7 meeting rooms

# Lamot

© Frank Thys

# Maison de la Poste



## IN THE HEART OF EUROPE'S FAVORITE CONFERENCE DESTINATION

Maison de la Poste is part of the huge Tour & Taxis site, a former industrial site in the heart of Brussels. One of the most iconic buildings is Maison de la Poste, a truly inspiring conference center that aims to be at the top of its field in hosting conferences. And that means something, because Brussels is - after Singapore - the most popular conference destination in the world.

www.tour-taxis.com/rooms_spaces/maison-de-la-poste

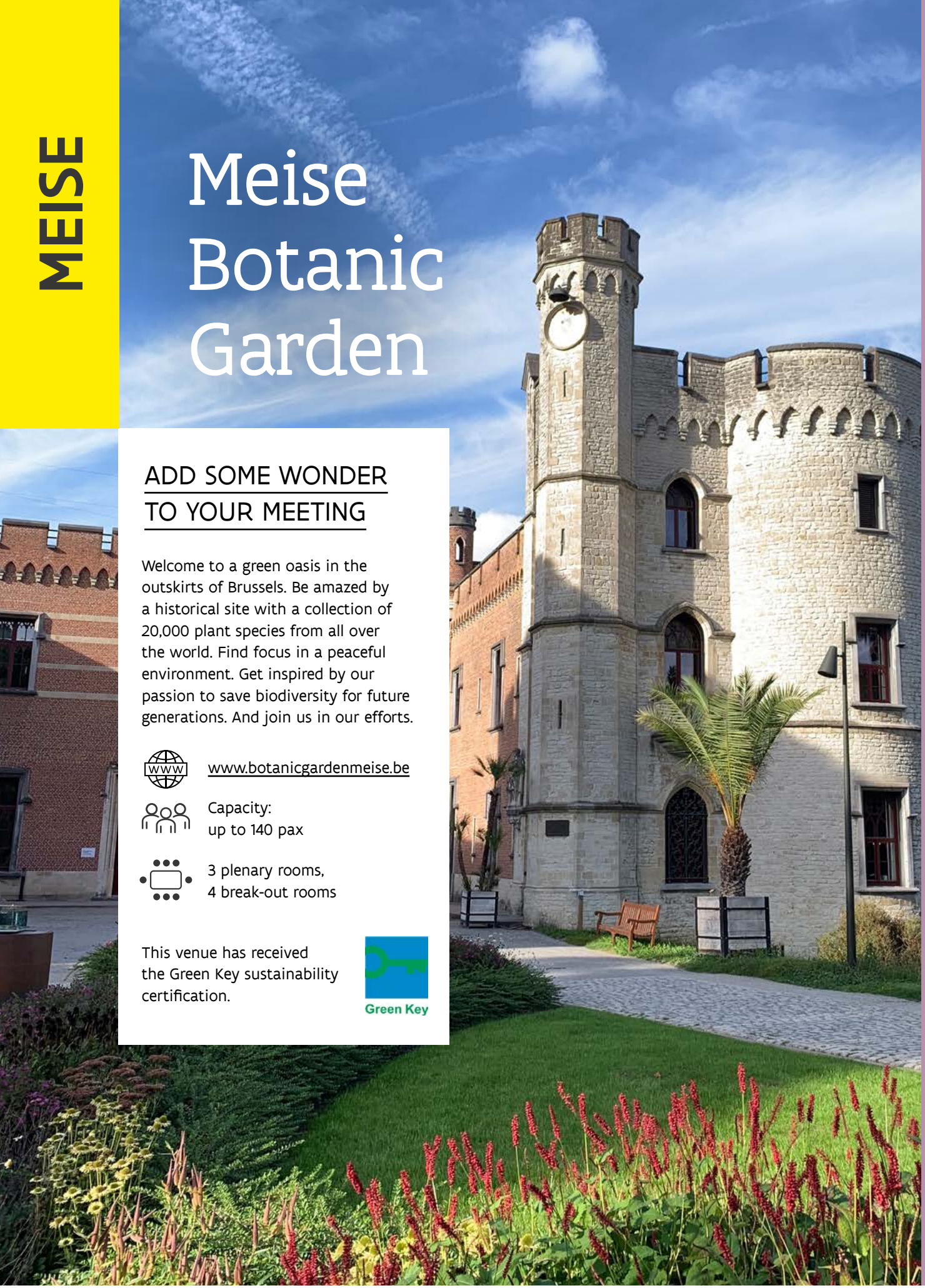
Capacity: up to 600 pax

2 plenary rooms
+ 14 break-out rooms

This venue has received the Green Key sustainability certification.

Green Key

# Meise Botanic Garden



## ADD SOME WONDER TO YOUR MEETING

Welcome to a green oasis in the outskirts of Brussels. Be amazed by a historical site with a collection of 20,000 plant species from all over the world. Find focus in a peaceful environment. Get inspired by our passion to save biodiversity for future generations. And join us in our efforts.

www.botanicgardenmeise.be

Capacity:
up to 140 pax

3 plenary rooms,
4 break-out rooms

This venue has received the Green Key sustainability certification.

Green Key

# Skyhall



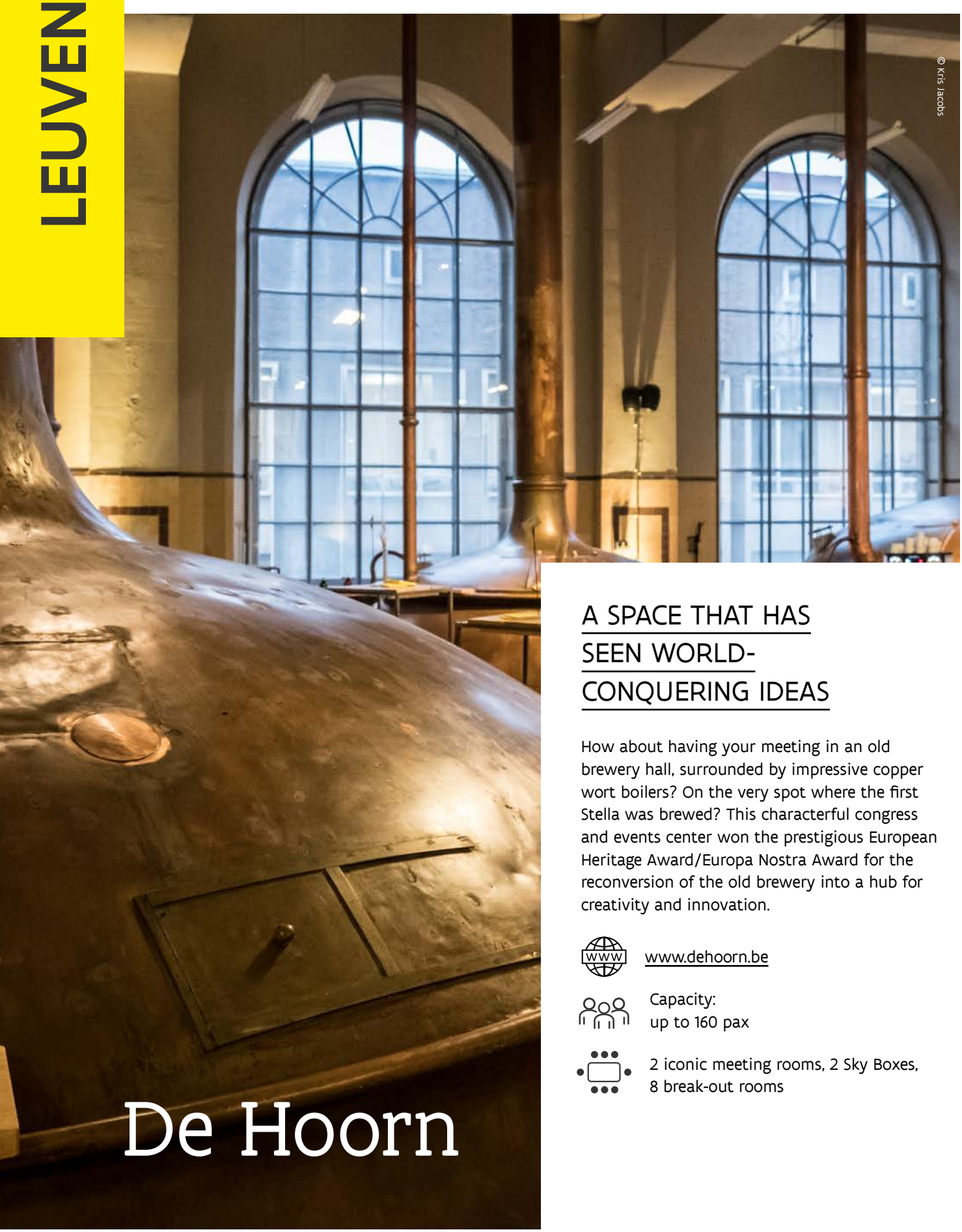
## A HIGH-FLYING VENUE WITH A VIEW

At Skyhall, the journey to your conference is almost as short as the walk from the aircraft. This modernist landmark was created for Expo 58 and now offers 6,100 m  of flexible event space across two floors. Its sweeping glass façades frame panoramic views of aircraft taking off and landing, giving conferences, exhibitions and premium events a backdrop in constant motion. For international delegates, accessibility simply does not get more immediate.

www.skyhall.be/en

Capacity:
up to 2,500 pax

6,100 m² of flexible conference and exhibition space across 2 floors




# De Hoorn

## A SPACE THAT HAS SEEN WORLD-CONQUERING IDEAS

How about having your meeting in an old brewery hall, surrounded by impressive copper wort boilers? On the very spot where the first Stella was brewed? This characterful congress and events center won the prestigious European Heritage Award/Europa Nostra Award for the reconversion of the old brewery into a hub for creativity and innovation.

www.dehoorn.be

Capacity:
up to 160 pax

2 iconic meeting rooms, 2 Sky Boxes,
8 break-out rooms



## WELCOME TO A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

This extraordinary meeting and congress venue is located in the Grand Beguinage, a UNESCO World Heritage site with fairytale houses, cobbled streets and the meandering river Dijle. Here you host your conference in one of the most beautiful and serene places in the city of Leuven, home to one of the oldest and most renowned European universities.

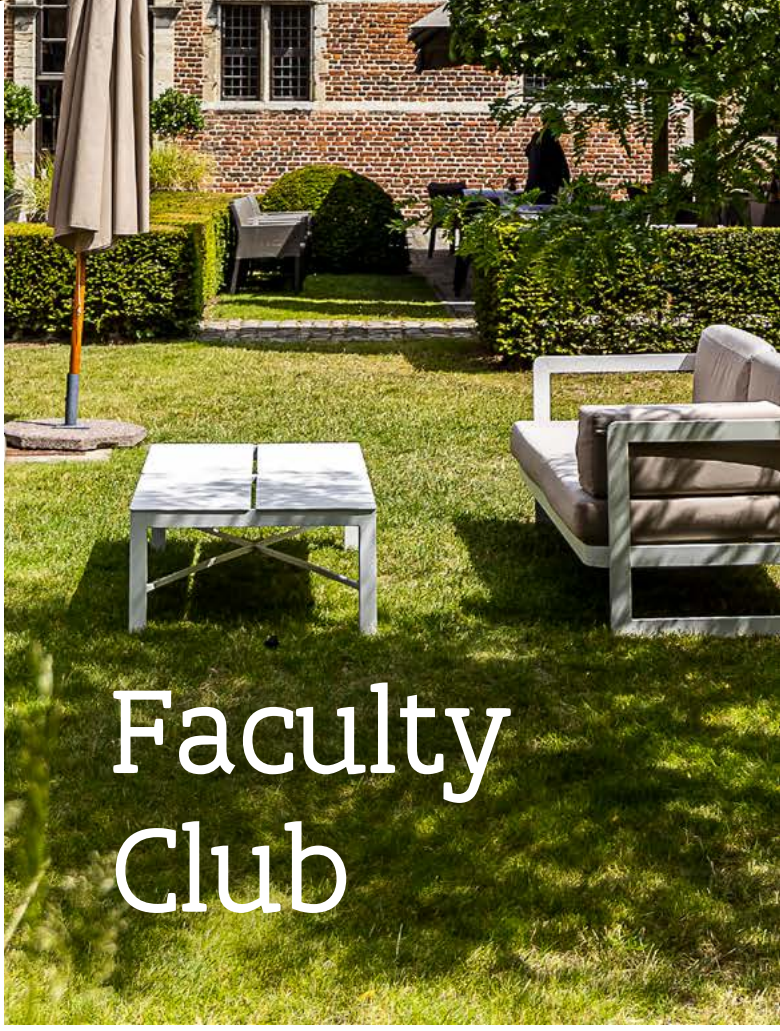
www.facultyclub.be

Capacity:
up to 260 pax

22 fully equipped meeting rooms

This venue has received the Green Key sustainability certification.

Green Key



# Faculty Club

# Irish College Leuven

## A MODERN VENUE WHERE HISTORY CONTINUES TO BE WRITTEN

The Irish College in Leuven was founded 400 years ago and quickly became one of the most important locations for Ireland's relationship with Europe. Today, this beautiful site has been masterfully renovated into a modern residential conference venue. The masterpiece is the former chapel, converted into a state-of-the-art auditorium for up to 220 guests.

www.irishcollegeleuven.eu

Capacity: up to 220 pax

auditorium +
9 conference rooms

# Park Abbey



## TRADITION IN INNOVATION, INNOVATION IN TRADITION

The Irish College in Leuven was founded 400 years ago and quickly became one of the most important locations for Ireland's relationship with Europe. Today, this beautiful site has been masterfully renovated into a modern residential conference venue. The masterpiece is the former chapel, converted into a state-of-the-art auditorium for up to 220 guests.

www.abdijvanpark.be

Capacity: up to 100 pax

2 plenary rooms, 5 break-out rooms

LEUVEN



# Keizersberg

## A MONUMENTAL ABBEY ABOVE THE CITY

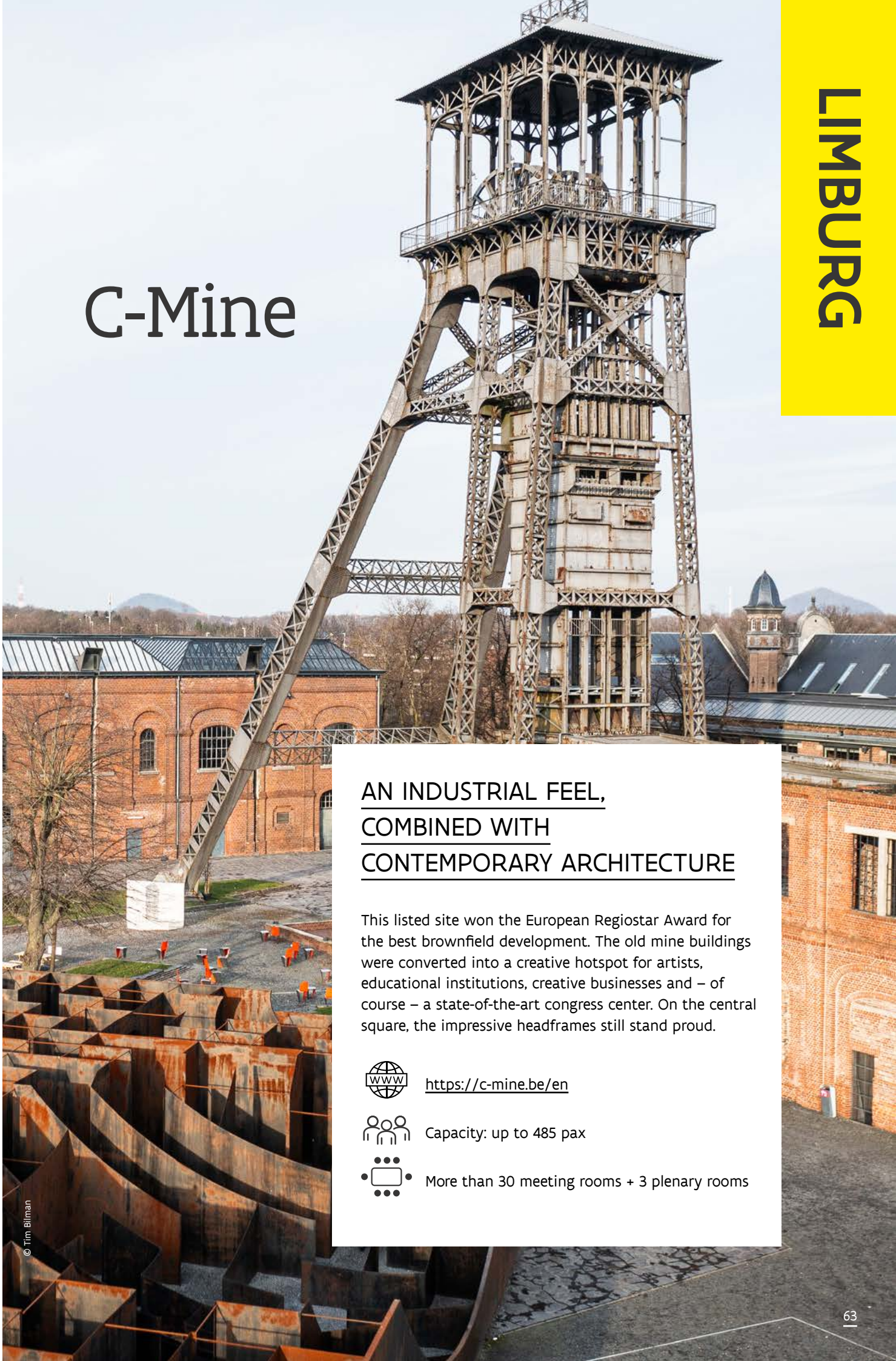
High above Leuven, Keizersberg welcomes your delegates to a former Benedictine abbey that feels like a small village within the city. Monumental halls, cloisters and a peaceful inner courtyard create space for conferences, workshops and receptions, while modern technology and professional support keep every part of your programme running smoothly. Today, students, artists and entrepreneurs give the historic site a contemporary and socially engaged spirit.

www.keizersberg.be/en

Capacity: up to 400 pax

Church, Chapter Hall, Dining Hall, 3 meeting rooms, cloister & inner courtyard

# C-Mine



© Tim Bilman

## AN INDUSTRIAL FEEL, COMBINED WITH CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE

This listed site won the European Regiostar Award for the best brownfield development. The old mine buildings were converted into a creative hotspot for artists, educational institutions, creative businesses and – of course – a state-of-the-art congress center. On the central square, the impressive headframes still stand proud.

https://c-mine.be/en

Capacity: up to 485 pax

More than 30 meeting rooms + 3 plenary rooms

# ZLDR Mine

## ORGANIZE YOUR MEETING 60 METERS ABOVE GROUND

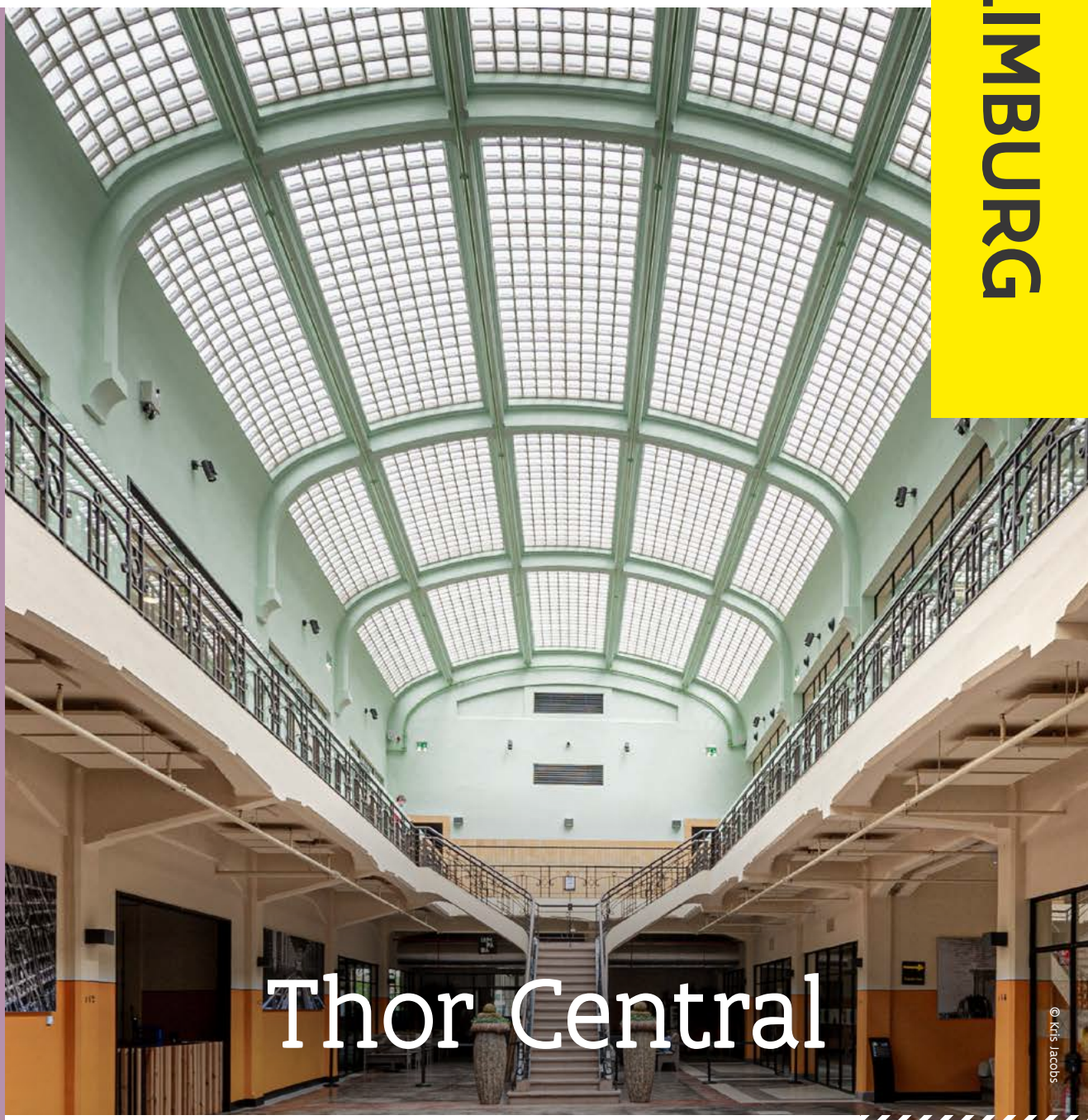
ZLDR MINE is housed in buildings of the former colliery of Zolder. The conference rooms have an authentic industrial feel, since much of the original equipment has been preserved. This guarantees some truly extraordinary meeting experiences. For example, you can host a meeting in the headframe, 60 meters above ground.

https://witti.be/locaties/schouwburg-zolder-mine/

Capacity:
up to 2,500 pax

6 plenary rooms,
2 break-out rooms, market square





# Thor Central

© Kris Jacobs

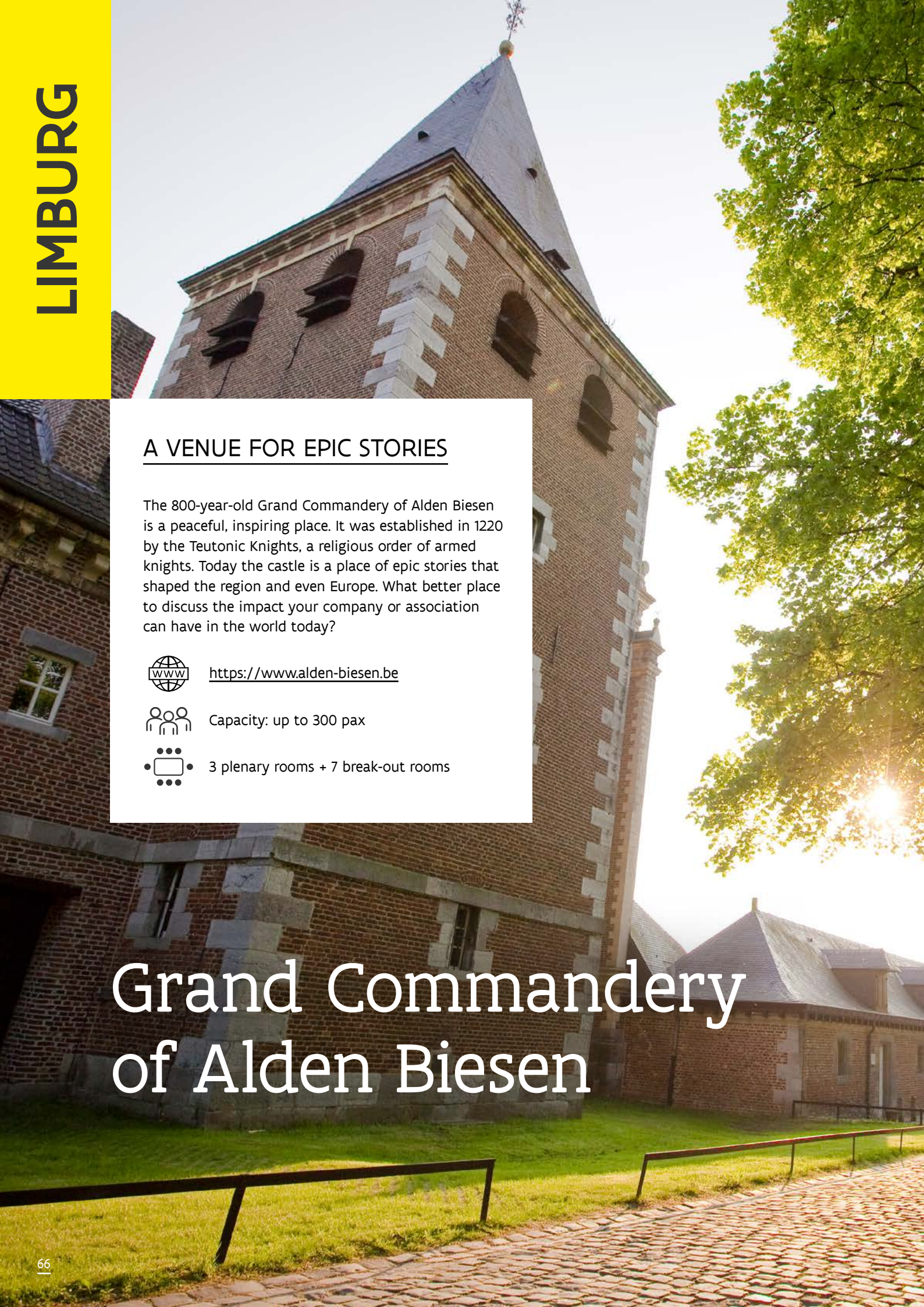
## A LIVELY SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SITE

Generations of miners have worked here, digging up millions of tons of coal. Today, science and technology companies in Thor Central are digging for new, sustainable forms of energy. The conference venue is at the heart of this exciting site and offers your attendees the two requisites for every successful congress or meeting: creativity and energy.

www.thorcentral.be/en

Capacity: up to 550 pax

6 plenary rooms,
10 break-out rooms



## A VENUE FOR EPIC STORIES

The 800-year-old Grand Commandery of Alden Biesen is a peaceful, inspiring place. It was established in 1220 by the Teutonic Knights, a religious order of armed knights. Today the castle is a place of epic stories that shaped the region and even Europe. What better place to discuss the impact your company or association can have in the world today?

https://www.alden-biesen.be

Capacity: up to 300 pax

3 plenary rooms + 7 break-out rooms

# Grand Commandery of Alden Biesen

# Herkenrode Abbey




## 8 CENTURIES OF INSPIRATION IN AN OASIS OF GREEN

Herkenrode Abbey invites your delegates into more than eight centuries of history. Founded by enterprising Cistercian nuns, it became the largest and wealthiest women's abbey in the Low Countries. Today, the restored Tiendschuur provides a monumental yet welcoming setting for conferences and events. An upper level, courtyard and surrounding gardens create natural opportunities for workshops and break-out sessions. Close to Hasselt yet surrounded by 100 hectares of nature, Herkenrode gives every gathering room to breathe, reflect and connect.

www.herita.be/en/herkenrode-abbey

Capacity: up to 700 pax

1 multifunctional event hall, upper-floor break-out space, courtyard & gardens




# Schouwburg Kortrijk

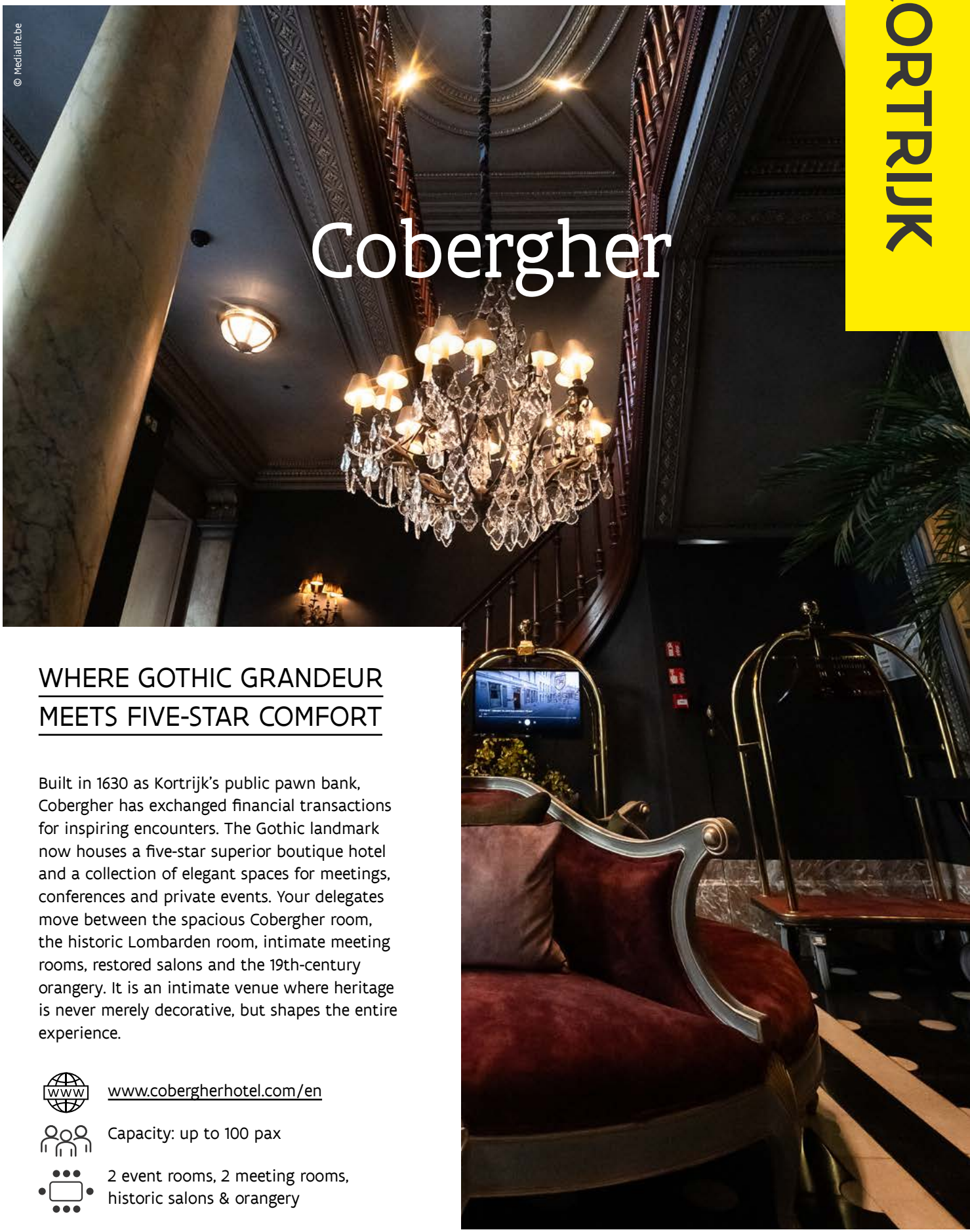
## PLATFORM FOR IMAGINATION

The Schouwburg Kortrijk theater will become a vibrant cultural hotspot as from 2025. This unique location combines its century of heritage with the congress facilities of a modern, sustainable and accessible building. Soon, this theater will be ready to provide your value-added congress attendee with a unique experience.

www.schouwburgkortrijk.be

Capacity: up to 800 pax

2 theatres,
4 break-out rooms




# Coberghe r

## WHERE GOTHIC GRANDEUR MEETS FIVE-STAR COMFORT

Built in 1630 as Kortrijk's public pawn bank, Coberghe r has exchanged financial transactions for inspiring encounters. The Gothic landmark now houses a five-star superior boutique hotel and a collection of elegant spaces for meetings, conferences and private events. Your delegates move between the spacious Coberghe r room, the historic Lombarden room, intimate meeting rooms, restored salons and the 19th-century orangery. It is an intimate venue where heritage is never merely decorative, but shapes the entire experience.

www.cobergherhotel.com/en

Capacity: up to 100 pax

2 event rooms, 2 meeting rooms, historic salons & orangery

# NOTES

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## Want to know more about your conference in Flanders?

Flanders is synonym for small cities, great venues and unforgettable experiences.
Go to **www.meetinflanders.com/contact-expert** to find the expert in your field or in your country.

## Want to know more about our Legacy service, free of charge for your association?

Create a sustainable long-term positive impact on society with your conference.



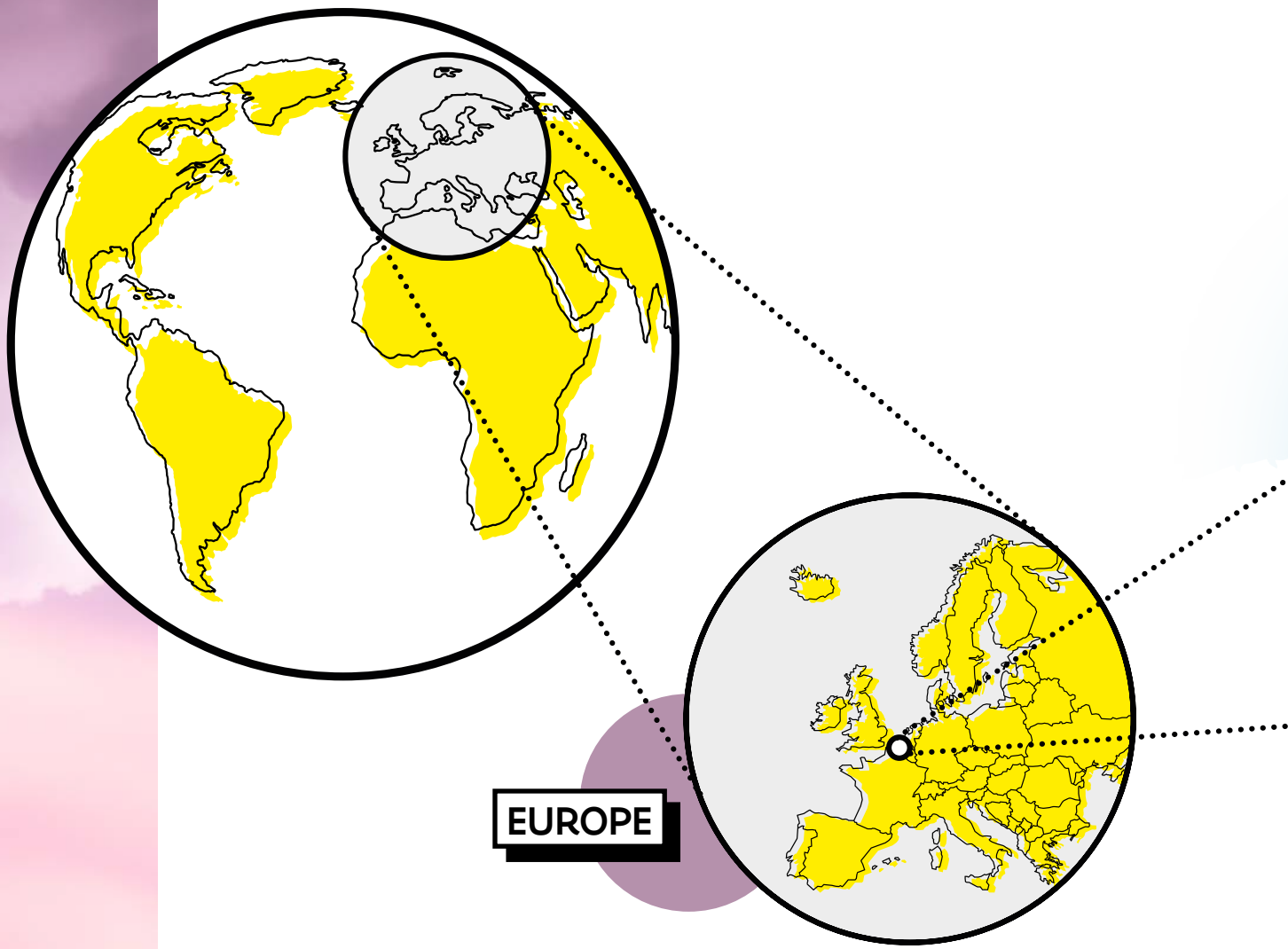
CONTACT LEGACY EXPERT
**GEMMEKE DE JONGH**:
**gemmeke.dejongh@meetinflanders.com**
+32 2 504 03 78

## Want to know more about the Flanders Heritage Venues?

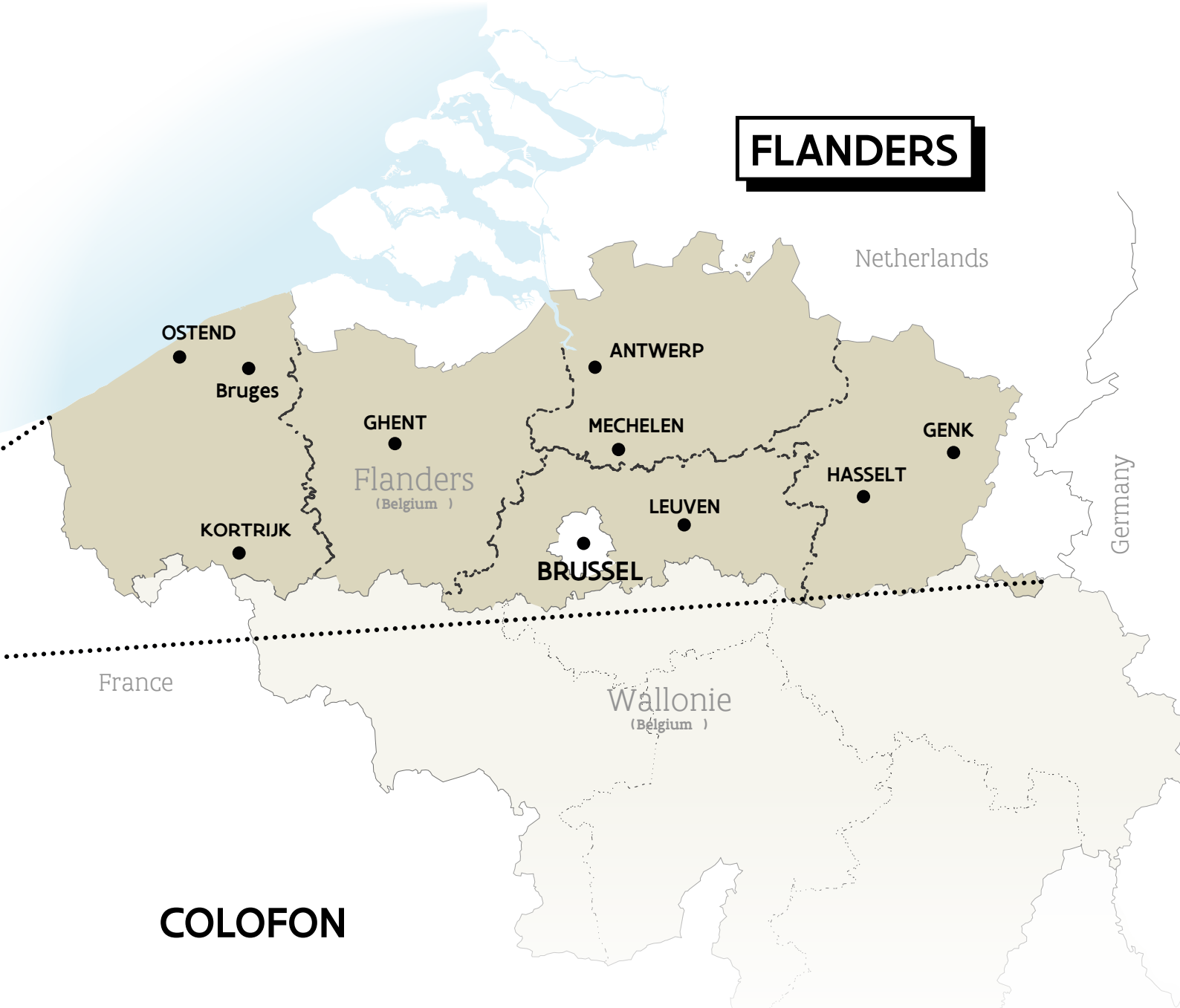
These state-of-the art conference venues, located in historic heritage sites, will make an unforgettable impression on your delegates.



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## MORE INFORMATION

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