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Every day events sell Sydney to the world

Paul Nicolaou



Thank goodness for the British and Irish Lions tour because this sporting phenomenon has breathed some life into Sydney's events calendar.

It's just a pity that Australia only hosts this international rugby juggernaut every 12 years.

Sydney is home to two of the highest profile games including the Lions versus the Wallabies Test at Accor Stadium on August 2. With a crowd of more than 80,000, the Test will be one of the high points of the tour and the economic opportunity it delivers to our city.

The economic value of the British and Irish Lions tour is a reminder why Sydney needs more events to add to the few our city currently hosts.

Consider the economic value of the tour and it's easy to see why. Rugby Australia estimates that 40,000 eager fans are visiting our shores.

And since Sydney is the gateway to Australia, you can guess they're spending a slab of their time in our wonderful city.

Besa Deda, chief economist at accountancy firm William Buck, has crunched the numbers.

She estimates the British and Irish Lions tour is pumping an estimated \$410m into the Australian economy – \$130m in NSW alone, much of it in Sydney. Premier Chris Minns and his government are alive to the opportunity the Test presents. Destination NSW has announced extended trading hours to 2am at eligible venues in the City of Sydney and in Parramatta.

The government, business and the wider community need to work together to fill Sydney's events calendar.

We can't expect a Taylor Swift entertainment phenomenon to land here every year. It's not good enough that the calendar is almost bare except for valued hardy perennials such as Vivid.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Treasurer Jim Chalmers will next month hold a round table in Canberra in an effort to boost lagging productivity in Australia.

Premier Minns could do well to host an events summit to chart a course for bigger and better events to boost our city's economy. It wouldn't hurt to have our best and brightest events people come up with ideas that will add to Sydney's lustre as a global city with all the attractions of a vibrant 24-hour economy.

Paul Nicolaou is executive director of Business Sydney