



Job Role: **Convention Bureau Lead**

Reporting to: Destination Development Manager

Contract Type: Permanent

Location: Inverness Town House, Inverness

Hours: 20 hours per week

Salary: £34,000 - £37,000 pro rata, dependent on experience

Benefits

- Pension scheme with employer contributions
- 28 days annual leave plus 9 public holidays pro rata
- Additional exceptional leave
- Flexible and hybrid working arrangements
- Professional development opportunities
- Opportunities to represent the Highlands nationally and internationally

About Visit Inverness Loch Ness

Visit Inverness Loch Ness is the official Destination Development and Marketing Management Organisation for Inverness and Loch Ness.

Representing over 490 businesses across more than 30 sectors, the organisation delivers destination marketing, business development, infrastructure projects, events, advocacy and visitor economy growth activity on behalf of its members and communities.

Established as the UK's first Tourism Business Improvement District, Visit Inverness Loch Ness operates across a destination spanning over 1,200 square miles, including the Highland Capital of Inverness and the world-famous Loch Ness.

The organisation's Business Plan 2024-2029 identifies business events, conferences and year-round economic growth as key strategic priorities. This role will play a central part in delivering those ambitions.

Role Purpose

The Convention Bureau Lead will establish and develop the Convention Bureau function for Inverness and Loch Ness.

This is a unique opportunity to establish and shape the Convention Bureau for Inverness and Loch Ness. Rather than joining an existing team, the successful candidate will build a new business function that supports the long-term sustainability of Visit Inverness Loch Ness through conference attraction, strategic partnerships and income generation.

Initially offered on a 20-hour per week basis, the role is intended to grow alongside the Convention Bureau. Subject to achieving agreed performance milestones, securing sustainable income and demonstrating measurable impact, it is anticipated that the position will develop into a full-time role.

The postholder will be responsible for attracting conferences, meetings, incentive travel and business events to the destination, increasing economic impact and supporting year-round visitor demand.

Working closely with destination partners, industry leaders, public sector stakeholders and local ambassadors, the role will position Inverness and Loch Ness as a leading destination for conferences and business events while supporting the long-term sustainability of Visit Inverness Loch Ness through partnership development, commercial opportunities and external funding.

Success in this role will not be measured solely by the number of conferences secured, but by the establishment of a sustainable Convention Bureau function that delivers long-term economic impact and creates new opportunities for Visit Inverness Loch Ness and the wider destination.

This is an exciting opportunity for an ambitious and commercially minded individual to help shape the future of business events in the Highlands.

Key Responsibilities

Convention Bureau Development

- Develop and implement a Convention Bureau growth plan aligned with the Visit Inverness Loch Ness Business Plan 2024-2029.
- Establish and promote the Inverness Convention Bureau proposition.
- Develop conference attraction campaigns targeting national and international opportunities.
- Create and maintain a pipeline of conference, meeting and business event opportunities.
- Coordinate destination responses to conference enquiries and bidding opportunities.
- Monitor and report on economic impact, performance and return on investment.

Conference Attraction and Business Development

- Identify and pursue opportunities to attract conferences, association meetings and business events to the destination.
- Develop competitive bid proposals and presentations.
- Conduct venue sourcing, site inspections and familiarisation visits.
- Build relationships with conference organisers, event agencies, associations and professional congress organisers.
- Represent Visit Inverness Loch Ness at trade events, exhibitions and industry networking opportunities.
- Support the development of commissionable and market-ready business event products.

Highlands Conference Ambassador Programme

- Establish and manage a Highlands Conference Ambassador Programme.
- Identify and engage academic, health, public sector and industry leaders capable of attracting conferences to the destination.
- Build relationships with local champions across key sectors including renewable energy, health, environmental science, tourism, culture and innovation.
- Support ambassadors with bid development, destination information and event planning assistance.

Partnership and Stakeholder Engagement

- Build and maintain productive relationships with destination businesses, venues, accommodation providers and suppliers.
- Develop strategic relationships with organisations including Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, UHI, NHS Highland and industry partners.
- Identify opportunities for strategic investment, sponsorship and partnership support.
- Promote collaboration across the destination to strengthen the conference and business events offer.

Commercial Development and Funding

- Support the development of sustainable income streams associated with Convention Bureau activity.
- Identify and pursue funding opportunities to support business events development.
- Contribute to partnership proposals, funding applications and investment opportunities.
- Support the growth of conference-related revenue opportunities for the organisation and its members.

Governance and Reporting

- Ensure activities are delivered in line with organisational policies and procedures.
- Prepare reports, performance updates and business cases for senior management and the Board.
- Present progress updates and performance reports to the Senior Leadership Team and Board as required.
- Maintain accurate records of enquiries, opportunities, conversions and economic impact.
- Contribute positively to organisational planning and continuous improvement.

Line Management Responsibility

This role has no direct line management responsibility.

Budget Responsibility

There is currently no dedicated conference bid fund associated with this role.

The postholder will identify conference opportunities, prepare business cases for strategic investment and seek approval for bid expenditure where appropriate.

The postholder will manage agreed project budgets and ensure value for money across all Convention Bureau activity.

Person Specification

Essential

- Experience in one or more of the following:
 - Business development
 - Tourism
 - Destination management
 - Economic development
 - Business events
 - Sales or account management
 - Partnership development
- Excellent communication, presentation and influencing skills.
- Strong commercial awareness with experience of developing partnerships, generating income or creating business opportunities.
- Experience preparing proposals, funding applications or business cases.
- Ability to build productive relationships across public and private sectors.
- Excellent organisational skills with the ability to work independently.
- Full UK driving licence and willingness to travel.

Desirable

- Experience working within a destination management organisation, local authority or economic development environment.
- Experience of conference attraction, convention bureau activity or business events.
- Understanding of association conferences and the wider meetings industry.
- Knowledge of the Highlands and Islands economy and visitor economy.
- Experience of partnership development or sponsorship acquisition.
- Experience of CRM systems and pipeline management.
- Relevant degree or equivalent professional experience.

Key Performance Indicators

Year One

Convention Bureau Development

- Establish the Convention Bureau function.
- Develop the Convention Bureau proposition and business development plan.
- Produce a conference bid toolkit and destination sales materials.
- Create a venue and supplier database.
- Implement systems to manage conference enquiries and opportunities.

Partnership Development

- Launch the Highlands Conference Ambassador Programme.
- Build relationships with key regional partners.
- Establish relationships with conference organisers, associations and business event professionals.
- Represent Visit Inverness Loch Ness at agreed trade events.

Business Development

- Build a robust pipeline of conference opportunities.
- Submit expressions of interest and conference bids where appropriate.
- Secure at least one external funding opportunity, strategic partnership or commercial income opportunity to support future Convention Bureau development.

Year Two and Beyond

- Increase conference wins and delegate numbers
- Generate recurring partnership income
- Increase business events economic impact
- Grow ambassador participation
- Develop sustainable commercial opportunities
- Support the long-term growth and reputation of Inverness and Loch Ness as a conference destination

Why Join Us?

This is an opportunity to create something genuinely new.

You will play a central role in establishing the Convention Bureau for Inverness and Loch Ness, working alongside businesses, public sector partners, academic institutions and industry leaders to develop a business function that delivers lasting economic impact for the Highlands.

For the right candidate, this role offers the opportunity to influence strategy, shape a growing service and develop alongside the Convention Bureau as it expands.

Application Process

Applicants should submit a CV and covering letter outlining their suitability for the role and their vision for developing business events in Inverness and Loch Ness.

Applicants are asked to submit the above to Ellen Fogel Walker, CEO of Visit Inverness Loch Ness by Sunday 9th August by emailing your documents to ellen@visitiln.com.

If you have any questions or would like to explore this opportunity further, please reach out to us to set up a time to talk.

Shortlisted candidates will receive a briefing pack including the Visit Inverness Loch Ness Business Plan and supporting information on the Convention Bureau proposal.

Candidates will be asked to deliver a 15-minute presentation outlining:

- Their priorities during the first 90 days.
- How they would establish the Convention Bureau.
- Their approach to developing partnerships and creating a sustainable pipeline of conference opportunities.

Interviews are likely to take place the week commencing 31st August 2026 in Inverness.