

**AVS CONFERENCE
& AWARDS**

2026

3RD- 4TH DECEMBER



Events and
Conferencing

Academic Venue Solutions

Connecting event organisers with exceptional spaces

sponsorship opportunities

Introduction

We're Academic Venue Solutions (AVS), a friendly not-for-profit marketing group. We've been around since 1981, working hand in hand with our members to provide venue bookers with a vast range of choice when searching for their perfect venue for their events, and what's more this service is absolutely free!

Imagine us as a big, happy family of academic venues, all across the UK, ready to connect you with unique meeting spaces and learning environments. Membership with us is open to all academic venues across the UK, and we're proud to boast a diverse range of high-quality meeting spaces and top-notch accommodation offered by our members.

Our dedicated team, headed by Rachael Lee, are always ready to engage with members and event organisers, to really understand what you need. Our board, led by Emma Woodcock, is a powerhouse of industry veterans, operations managers, and marketing whizzes. They really get the ins and outs of what event planners need, and understand the Higher Education sector in the commercial world.



RACHAEL LEE

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

About our Conference

03



Square Peg, Round Hole: Redefining Fit in Academic Venues

Academic venues have often been expected to operate within structures that weren't designed for commercial success. This conference is about challenging that fit and reshaping it.

This is not just another conference, it's being repositioned as a strategic platform that reflects the real challenges and value of academic venues, with content designed to drive change, not just conversation.

Attended by senior decision makers from over 50 academic venues.

why invest?



Reasons to invest in the AVS Conference

Our members are seeking to partner with high quality, ethical products and suppliers which will improve their organisation and offering to customers. We would expect sponsors to have a proven track record as a high-quality supplier offering relevant services to academic venues and who see the introduction as a sponsor as the springboard to develop new business accounts within the academic venue sector.

By sponsoring the conference you will get the opportunity to meet a diverse range of contacts from academic venues for example, Sales & Marketing Managers, Revenue Managers, Event Managers, General Managers, Catering Managers, Heads of Commercial departments to name but a few.

Past sponsors have enjoyed creating solid relationships and also reported on a return on their investment. Our network and community are open to new ways of working and suppliers that can help them stand out from the crowd.

The Venue

KEELE HALL SITS WITHIN KEELE UNIVERSITY'S 600-ACRE CAMPUS IN STAFFORDSHIRE, SURROUNDED BY LAKES AND WOODLAND.

Keele has been recognised as a leader in sustainability in higher education through several awards and accreditations, including the Global Sustainability Institution of the Year at the 2021 International Green Gown Awards. The campus boasts a Low Carbon Energy Generation Park, supplying up to 50% of its electricity from renewable sources.

Keele Hall is a beautiful Grade II listed mansion is one of Staffordshire's finest stately homes, previously owned by the Sneyd family. In 1949, the estate became the home of the newly created University College of North Staffordshire, later to become Keele University.



The Anti-Pitch Challenge

Forget the usual exhibition pitch.

This year, we're giving exhibitors five minutes in the spotlight and challenging them to bring their business to life in a way our audience won't forget.

Five Minutes to Make Your Mark is part business showcase, part talent competition, and a genuine chance to do something different.

You'll have five minutes to tell your story, show what sets your service apart, and demonstrate how you could help shape the future of events and commercial activity within academic venues.

The Competitive Twist

Delegates vote for the pitch they find most innovative, engaging and relevant.

No more than 3 slides allowed!

Who made the strongest impression?

Who brought something genuinely different to the room?

The winning exhibitor will be announced at the conference.



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The Challenge...

No Standard Sales Presentation

We want fresh thinking and bold ideas, a presentation that makes people sit up and take notice.

Tell a story.

Tackle an industry challenge.

Share an unexpected insight. Demonstrate an innovation.

Involve the audience.

How you use your five minutes is entirely up to you.

Your Audience...

You'll be presenting directly to senior university professionals across:

- Commercial strategy and leadership
- Sales and business development
- Marketing and communications
- Conferences and events
- Hospitality and venue operations

These are the people who can influence developing university venues, improving performance, and championing the suppliers who help them move forward.

Pitch Package Investment

Includes:

- A five-minute slot in the AVS Exhibitor Challenge
- Access to the daytime conference programme
- Space to display your pop-up banner
- Opportunities to meet and network with AVS members throughout the day
- Attendance at the AVS Conference Dinner, with further opportunities to continue conversations in a relaxed evening setting
- Recognition as an official AVS Conference exhibitor

£995 + VAT
Only 10 Available

This is far more than a place for a banner.

It's a chance to put your business in front of the right people, start meaningful conversations, and make sure delegates remember your name long after the conference ends.

Think you can make an impact in five minutes?
We'd love to see what you've got.

Join us at Keele this December and take your place in the AVS Exhibitor Challenge.

Five minutes. One room full of decision-makers. Make it count.

Please contact us to discuss taking your place on the anti-pitch.

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