



## **BEFUTURE Signature Event**

### ***Shaping the Future of Europe's Business Events***

**Monday, 23 February 2026**

**Wintercircus, Ghent, Belgium**

**09:00-17:00 (Drinks reception 16:00-17:00)**

## **PROGRAMME**

**09:00 – 10:00 | Networking and Registration Coffee (@The Gallery)**

**10:00 – 10:15 | Welcome – Opening and Icebreaker (@The Club)**

*Welcome by moderator: [Magali Minet](#)*

**10:15 – 10:30 | Setting the Stage for Europe's BE Future (@The Club)**

*Welcome by Consortium Lead – [Sònia Serracarbassa](#) (Head of Convention Bureau Catalunya, Spain)*

*Welcome by Local Host – [Evelyne Bardyn](#) (Head of Flanders Convention Bureau and EventFlanders, Belgium)*

- *Setting the tone: "From Vision to Legacy – The BEFuture Journey"*
- *Highlights: BEFuture milestones and partner highlights from 2023 to 2026*

**10:30 – 11:00 | Panel on how policy makers and institutions can support and co-shape the future of Business Events:** Reflections on Europe's role in shaping a resilient and innovative BE industry. (@The Club)

*Moderator:* Magali Minet

- **Patrick Torrent** (President, UN Tourism Affiliate Members Board and Vice President NECSTouR)
- **Bruno Castro**, Policy Officer for Tourism (DG Move, European Commission)
- **Gema Fernández** (Project Officer, European Commission)
- **Sandie Meyniel** (Head of International Sector Development & Strategy Atout France)

**11:00 – 11:30 | Keynote Peter Verbiest**, Senior Communication Strategist

***How Moonshot Projects can shape Innovative, Sustainable and Flourishing Business Events.*** (@The Club)

**11:30-12:00 | Interactive Introduction to the Accelerators (@The Club)**

***Discover the [Innovative projects - BEFuture](#)***

**12:00 – 12:45 | Networking Lunch** (@The Gallery)

**12:15-12:45 | Parallel programme: Walk – Tiny tour outside the Wintercircus**

Meeting point: @ the registration desk

**12:45-13:15 | Marketplace for all** (@The Gallery)

**13:30-15:00 | Deep dive: choose one of the 4 parallel sessions**

**SESSION 1: MOONSHOT – TOWARDS LEGACY (@The Gallery – part 1)**

Designing Moonshot Projects to shape Innovative, Sustainable and Flourishing Business Events.

By [Peter Verbiest](#), Senior Communication Strategist

**SESSION 2: TALENT (@The Gallery - part 2)**

Accelerating Talent: Futureproofing our business event industry

Moderators:

- **[Amber Herrewijn](#)** (European Tourism Futures Institute)
- **[Dieuwertje Plantinga](#)** (Brownys Productions)
- **[Dagmar Narloch](#)** (Obsession)
- **[Irene Giustini](#)** (NHL Stenden University of Applied Science-)
- **[Lisa Kolisnyk](#)** (NHL Stenden University of Applied Science)
- **[Ton Otten](#)** (ExpoTalent)

**SESSION 3: Five x TED Talks:** Introduction by [Sofie Bracke](#) – Alderman for Economy, Port, Trade, Tourism and Public Cleanliness (@The Club)

The TED Talks align with BEFuture’s four key themes – *Climate Change and Circularity, Talent and Inclusion, Event Experience, and Governance and Impact*—spotlighting fresh perspectives within each. Be inspired by five powerful voices from across Europe, each bringing bold ideas and real-world impact.

Moderator: Magali Minet

- **[Stijn Jansen](#)**, Creative Director, Wintercircus
- **[Marco Van Leeuwen](#)**, Researcher & Senior Lecturer in ethics, innovation, accessibility of leisure/tourism/events, Breda University of Applied Sciences
- **[Jonathan Terlouw](#)**, Accessibility Expert and Policy Officer UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy, The Netherlands

- **Lieven Bertels**, internationally recognized leader in immersive experiences and innovation at Barco. Lieven explores the dual role of the host city, and its architectural gems play in hosting events. He reflects on how events extend beyond conference halls into the heart of the city, creating socio-economic impact and a sense of belonging for both visitors and residents.

#### **SESSION 4: Strategic discussion (Board room)**

##### ***Beyond BEFuture on invitation only***

**Moderated** by Consortium Partners BEFuture

!!! If you would like to join, please apply by sending an email to [Gemmeke.dejongh@visitflanders.com](mailto:Gemmeke.dejongh@visitflanders.com)

#### **15:00-15:15 | Transfer to the Club**

#### **15:15-15:45 |**

- **Recap of the afternoon sessions** by Magali Minet
- **Closing** by [Sònia Serracarbassa](#) (Head of Convention Bureau Catalunya, Spain) and [Evelyne Bardyn](#) (Head of Flanders Convention Bureau and EventFlanders, Belgium)

#### **16:00-17:00 | Networking Drink (The Gallery)**