



SIGNAL HONOUR: South Africa will host the 2022 International Congress on immunology, a first for the continent. PICTURE: GETTY IMAGES

City wins bid to host congress

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THE Cape Town Convention Centre (CTICC) has secured the winning bid to host the 2022 International Congress on Immunology, which is expected to see 6 000 delegates in attendance to share knowledge in a field that is driving breakthroughs.

The congress, which will be hosted for the first time in Africa, is expected to bring a bounty of knowledge to the province – and the nation.

The field of immunology delivers advances in basic and clinical research that affect the lives of billions worldwide.

Vaccines save lives, especially among children – and anti-inflammatory drugs improve the quality of life of countless autoimmune disease patients.

The field was driving breakthroughs that promise to revolutionise vaccines, treatments for cancer, autoimmunity, allergy and immune deficiencies, and

to improve outcomes of transplantation.

CTICC CEO Julie-May Ellingson, honoured to be hosting such a high-calibre medical conference, said: “Securing such an event for Cape Town and Africa, was an enormous team effort between the CTICC, Cape Town and the Western Cape Convention Bureau, a strategic division of Wesgro and the local organising committee.

“The healthcare and medical sectors are well represented in our forward book, which reflects Cape Town’s growing profile as an academic and research hub. We look forward to working with the local organising committee to create a meaningful and exceptional event.”

Cape Town’s hosting bid beat out other major competing cities including London, Paris, Toronto and Mexico City.

The international congress will be led by South African Immunology Society president and professor of immunology at UCT Clive Gray and Federation of

African Immunology Societies secretary general Faith Osier, who is based at the Kemri-Wellcome Trust in Kilifi, Kenya.

Osier said: “It’s the time for Africa. Our continent has numerous challenges but is also making incredible progress.

“The congress will leave a lasting legacy centred on scientific innovation that will spur on the next generation.”

Gray said exciting work lay ahead of the congress. “Our task will be to build a pre-conference legacy over the next six years by galvanising the best minds on the continent and growing new minds to become part of the global immunology community. “In 2022, we want to bring the world’s best and most exciting immunologists to Cape Town and task them to put their minds to the infectious disease burden in Africa and translate immunology into human health,” he said.

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