

HOW CANADA'S NATIONAL MEETINGS STRATEGY IS DRIVING REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH

Presented by

Skift.

+

CANADA 
BUSINESS EVENTS

+



**DESTINATION
CANADA**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The most progressive destinations worldwide are positioning themselves as thought leaders in specific advanced industries to engage meeting and event organizers active in those industries. Rather than selling a city based solely on its infrastructure, access and capacity, destination marketing and management organizations (DMMOs) are also promoting their most significant clusters in STEM sectors to differentiate the region in the global meetings marketplace.

This type of sector expertise strategy is not necessarily new, but it has scaled exponentially in cities around the world in the last few years.

Business Events Canada — part of Destination Canada, promoting meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions — launched just such a knowledge-based, business event development strategy in 2017. The organization is now leveraging the country's wealth of industry and academic leaders in seven key sectors: Aerospace Technologies, Agriculture and Agri-food Manufacturing, Clean Tech, Advanced Manufacturing, Life Sciences, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and Natural Resources.

Business Events Canada is matching specific cities, which have existing centers of excellence, with one or more of those sectors. It also produced research and sales materials to use at conferences such as Innovate Canada and London Tech Week. As such,

Business Events Canada performs as the tip of the spear to connect potential clients in advanced industries with individual Canadian cities.

This report profiles more than 10 Canadian DMMOs, spanning many different sizes, budgets and governance models, and how they're adapting their business event sourcing strategy with that of Business Events Canada's strategy. It also explores how those organizations are collaborating more intentionally and strategically with the national organization to elevate their city on the world stage.

Critical to this inquiry, Skift approached each DMMO with questions about how meetings and events in high-growth sectors are helping drive long-term economic development in their local clusters. While this is challenging to quantify, because of the length of time that those legacy impacts take to gestate, every city stated that bringing conferences in their clusters to engage local leaders is clearly a pipeline for accelerating job growth, attracting outside talent and investment, and developing increasing levels of local expertise.

Today, senior business event organizers, destination procurement executives, and C-suite leaders have a new methodology to source cities, based on access to knowledge. Business Events Canada is providing a platform to deliver that access, which is unprecedented in scale worldwide, to benefit both visiting organizations and the host destination.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: The Global Meetings Industry Is a Platform for Progress	5
Business Events Canada's Sector Expertise Strategy Is Unprecedented in Scale	8
Innovate Canada: Aligning Business Events and Economic Development	12
Q&A with Tara Gordon, VP, Business Events, Tourism Toronto	15
Case Study: Business Events Canada and Tourisme Montréal Win New World Summit AI Event	19
Case Study: IMPACT Sustainability Conference and Clean Tech FAM Trip, British Columbia	21
Q&A with Ryan Kuffner, VP of Sales & Business Development, Economic Development Winnipeg	24
The Regional Economic Impacts of Business Events in Advanced Industries	27
A. Ottawa Tourism: Autonomous Vehicles, Aerospace, and Defense	28
B. Explore Edmonton: Medical Imaging and Nanotechnology	29
C. Tourism Saskatoon: Life Sciences and Bio-Technology	31
D. Calgary Meetings + Conventions: Energy and Agri-Food	32
E. Business Events Victoria: Ocean and Marine Science	34
Emerging Business Event Markets Are Growing Their Advanced Industries	36
A. Waterloo Region Tourism Marketing Corporation: Quantum Computing and Auto Tech	37
B. Tourism Yukon: Mining, Climate Change, and Archaeology	38
C. Tourism Kelowna: Agriculture and Viticulture	40
Key Takeaways	41

ABOUT SKIFT

Skift is the largest industry intelligence platform providing media, insights, and marketing to key sectors of travel. Skift deciphers and defines trends for global CEOs and CMOs across travel, dining, and wellness sectors through a combination of news, research, conferences, and marketing services.

MASTHEAD

Editor at Large, SkiftX / Greg Oates
Writer / Jeff Heilman
Editor, SkiftX / Alison McCarthy
Creative Strategy Director / Matt Heidkamp
Project Manager, SkiftX / Gianna Greco
Designer / Joanna Gonzalez
Senior Designer / Ping Chan

EXECUTIVE LETTER

Conferences are catalysts for thriving economies. While we've long capitalized on Canada's vast and natural beauty, Business Events Canada is refocusing the conversation surrounding business events to spotlight Canada's chief economic drivers and the intellectual capital organizers want to leverage for their business events.

It's no longer enough to talk exclusively about Canada's impressive landscapes and dynamic conference infrastructure. We must change the conversation to set Canada apart on the world stage. Aligning our message with Canada's global trade drivers and pinpointing the key economic sectors where we hold a competitive advantage positions Canada as a safe, dynamic and smart choice for international conferences and incentive travel programs, while opening our message to a whole new audience.

Our Team Canada approach allows us to collaborate with federal, provincial and municipal government agencies, foreign affairs bodies, our destination marketing teams and local economic development agencies to connect decision-makers with Canadian centres of excellence across a variety of industries. In the process, we are offering conference organizers access to a knowledge base that not only augments their conference agenda, but potentially helps grow the organization's membership while fuelling trade, investment and talent acquisition.



Chantal Sturk-Nadeau,
Executive Director,
Business Events Canada

What does this mean for Canada? It means we gain access to senior level executives at trade events around the world. It means our mid-size cities are able to compete for business event opportunities previously out of reach. It means expanding our outreach beyond traditional sales channels. It means spreading our message through multiple contact points throughout an organization: senior executive, marketing and sales, and conference organizer.

We think of this as future proofing Canada's MICE market. By doubling down our investment in our sector strategy and focusing on "made-in-Canada" success stories, we can easily demonstrate Canada's competitive edge to gain a larger share of the global business events industry.

Chantal Sturk-Nadeau
Executive Director
Business Events Canada

CANADA 
BUSINESS EVENTS
businesseventscanada.ca

 **DESTINATION
CANADA**
destinationcanada.com

INTRODUCTION: THE GLOBAL MEETINGS INDUSTRY IS A PLATFORM FOR PROGRESS

The impact of the meetings, incentive, conference and exhibition (MICE) industry on the Canadian economy has always been significant, relating to short-term delegate expenditure and long-term job growth and economic development. These types of business events are also an ideal way to counteract seasonality because international business events take place throughout the year, ensuring a more consistent national visitor economy on an annual basis. The latest data, with an emphasis on US meeting and event business, shows:

- In 2017, MICE travelers totaled 1.3M arrivals with a \$1B impact on the Canadian economy (StatCan ITS 2017)
- Global MICE industry valued at \$752 billion in 2016 (Allied Research Group)
- 57% of MICE travelers say they will take 1-2 extra days and stay for leisure purposes (Micer's)
- US business visitors are growing at a faster rate than US leisure visitors: 10% vs 6% (StatCan, ITS 2016)
- US business visitors spend 2x US leisure per night: \$124 vs \$250 (StatCan, ITS 2016)

During the last decade, the business events industry has evolved as a global innovation distribution channel. With the growth of advanced industries and high-tech startups of all sizes worldwide, an increasing number of destination marketing and management organizations (DMMOs) are positioning themselves as brokers of innovation, versus merely brokers of hospitality and tourism infrastructure. Meaning, they're leveraging their STEM industries and key cluster strengths more strategically to attract more international conferences in those industries. This business event development vision is known as either an economic sector strategy or sector expertise strategy.

Economic Sector Strategy

Business Events Canada has aligned its strategy with Canada's global trade priorities.



ICT
Information &
Communication
Tech



Life Sciences



Clean Tech



**Natural
Resources**



**Advanced
Manufacturing**



**Aerospace
Technologies**



**Agriculture
and Agri-Food
Manufacturing**

Québec City Business Destination

Québec City is one of the most exquisitely beautiful cities in the world, but Caroline Langelier, director of sales for Québec City Business Destination, explains that the city has a lot more to offer meeting and event planners. The destination organization collaborates closely with Québec International Economic Development to co-promote the region's expertise in advanced electronics, optics-photonics, and bio/cosmeceuticals.

"We do not know exactly to which extent it will increase meetings in Québec City, but I know it reinforces our position as being keen in those areas," said Langelier. "We currently work with a lot of researchers in those fields, which have many ongoing projects, so it helps us position Québec City to associations in new ways."

The comprehensive business events section of the Quebec City Business Destination website lists the city's key sectors in a high-profile area to showcase the local knowledge base. Planners are provided information such as: Québec City has the highest ratio of researchers per capita in Canada, and 40 percent of local jobs created over the last 10 years are knowledge-based. Langelier said, "Those sectors have been identified with our economic development team at Québec International as being the areas where international companies should invest since we have such a high level of expertise here."

One of the earliest examples of this in action, the German Convention Bureau (GCB) launched its "Germany by Expertise" business events sector expertise strategy in 2012. According to Matthias Schultze, director of the German Convention Bureau, "Meetings and events are platforms for the exchange of experiences and ideas that encourage innovation, knowledge transfer, education, and international understanding."

At the time, that was a significant departure for the GCB, which previously had promoted German cities to international event organizers based on the modernity of the airports, convention centers, hotels, and communications infrastructure.

Other national destination organizations, such as Visit Britain and Visit Holland, have also anchored their business event development strategies around sector expertise, building on their cluster strengths. As well, many city bureaus are building and codifying their knowledge networks to engage meeting decision-makers, ranging from Sydney and Melbourne in Australia, to Seattle and Washington, D.C. in the United States.

For all of these DMMOs, there is now much greater focus on how business events can enhance the growth and diversity of their local innovation economy by being catalysts for attracting high-value talent and international investment.

"The business events industry is a platform for progress for all participants and stakeholders," said Sherrif Karamat, CEO of the Professional Convention Management Association. "That doesn't just include the attendees, sponsors, and host organizations. The long-term benefits impact the entire community where business events take place, in terms of how events are catalysts for greater economic progress, social progress, and knowledge sharing."

Specifically, DMMOs are connecting international business event organizers with leaders in their innovation economies: universities and science labs; startup/enterprise companies, venture capital groups, and government and economic development leaders driving progress in their priority sectors.

To accomplish that, destination organizations are now expanding their networks well beyond their traditional tourism and hospitality partners. They're engaging local experts in their advanced industries to better understand what's happening in those fields and how they can collaborate with those leaders more effectively to attract more conferences in their industries.

Meaning, cities and countries are selling their smarts. They're promoting their brain power beyond their buildings. That gives destination organizations, in cities of all sizes, a new message and a new value proposition to share with business event organizers.

It also helps DMMOs elevate their relevance in their communities because they're now performing as catalysts and accelerators for a region's economic growth. Business events in advanced industries deliver long-term economic impacts beyond

the immediate, short-term attendee spend by attracting long-term outside investment and talent. That's a pipeline for growth stewarded primarily by destination organizations.

From the international event organizer's perspective, they now have more opportunities for increasing attendance, membership, and business development partnerships. They also have a greater potential to attract a higher number of quality sponsors, speakers, exhibitors, and customers.

In effect, DMMOs are ensuring the future success of their business event customers more effectively. By developing wider and deeper networks among their innovation economies, destination organizations can provide their customers with more customized access to that knowledge base.

"Organizations that are looking for places to host their annual event are not looking at how many five-star hotels you have in your city or the size of the convention center," said Guy-Joffroy Lord, director of business events for Tourisme Montréal. "More and more, we see clients who care about the value add of the destination from the perspective of the clusters and how a destination can help move their business or association forward, by connecting with world leaders in their field."



BUSINESS EVENTS CANADA'S NEW SECTOR EXPERTISE STRATEGY IS UNPRECEDENTED IN SCOPE



In the fall of 2017, Business Events Canada launched a new national sector expertise strategy in alignment with a number of Canada's key trade sectors: Aerospace Technologies, Agriculture and Agri-food Manufacturing, Clean Tech, Advanced Manufacturing, Life Sciences, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and Natural Resources.

The overarching goal for Business Events Canada is to bring more international meetings and events in those sectors to specific cities across Canada that have strong clusters of academic and industry expertise in each.

The value propositions for hosting a business event in Canada have always revolved around capacity, access, safety, affordability, hospitality, and quality of infrastructure. Building on that, Business Events Canada and the regional DMMOs from coast to coast are now also promoting Canada's key economic centers of excellence directly to international event decision-makers and organizers working in advanced industries.

The process to develop the sector expertise strategy began with first identifying the specific industry clusters across the country. Once those were determined, Business Events Canada highlighted the primary sectors aligned with each city and then created a national map of expertise in each of the Canada's seven priority industries.

Business Events Canada then produced sales and marketing materials for all seven verticals, showing the cities applicable to each and supplementary information on specific companies active in those industry verticals.

Those materials included videos, sector-specific overview papers, a content hub, and numerous stories that are continually being developed and pushed to new audiences, as well as delivering new messages to more established audiences.

With those in place, Business Events Canada is now engaging the world's top business, academic, science, and technology leaders on an entirely new platform built atop Canada's knowledge and innovation economy. The end goal is to convene those international leaders in Canada, based on the access to some of the world's most innovative minds in Canada.

Business Events Canada is:

- 1.** Developing conference prospects that align with Canada's expertise and international reputation in key advanced industries.
- 2.** Proactively promoting Canada as a business events hub in advanced industries by leveraging the country's economic strengths, competitive advantages, and centers of excellence.
- 3.** Applying a multi-pronged approach to cultivate new business through traditional meeting planner relationships, tradeshow, and industry familiarization trips, in addition to newly created C-suite experiences to showcase Canada for meetings and events.

"The sector expertise strategy to help develop business events is another way to look at the whole meetings, conventions, and incentive industry, where many event organizers are considering a host location based on how it matches their growth objectives for their groups," said Virginie De Visscher, director of business development - economic sectors for Business Events Canada. "It's a mind-shift for meeting planners and their organizations who are thinking, 'Okay, well if I start looking at this, I have a different value proposition to bring back to my board and the decision makers, so I can elevate the discussion to a higher level and be more than just about cost and meeting rooms.'"

As part of its sector expertise strategy, Business Events Canada has fostered industry-driven partnerships with a variety of global organizations, such as The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), the world's largest technical professional organization dedicated to advancing technology for the benefit of humanity, and the Council of Engineering and Scientific Society Executives (CESSE). By partnering with these and other professional organizations, Canada raises its profile revolving around global advanced industry expertise and economic strengths, as well as the many diverse options available for sector-specific conferences across the country.

The scale of Business Events Canada's sector expertise strategy is enormous. From a global context, it is arguably more comprehensive in scope than any other country worldwide.

Business Events Canada's vision embraces cities of all sizes across a broad geographical spectrum. Some of the destinations, such as Kelowna and Waterloo, are just emerging, or continuing to evolve, in terms of their exposure in the international meetings market and the growth of their priority sectors. Others are global capitals, such as Toronto and Montréal, with knowledge ecosystems pushing the leading edge of new industries, ranging from life sciences to artificial intelligence.

"Business Events Canada's economic sector strategy is raising our profile on the international conference stage, and it is fantastic," said Minto Schneider, CEO of the Waterloo Regional Tourism Marketing Corporation. "It's leading to new opportunities for us to compete for high profile tech sector events, like True North. That's a two-day 'tech-for-good' conference that was held here first in 2018, and now they're coming back in 2019 and beyond. Business Events Canada's strategy is working really well, and we're very happy."

The organizations included in this report are: Business Events Canada, Invest in Canada,

For the purposes of this report, Skift engaged leaders at destination organizations and economic development agencies across Canada to explore two components of Business Events Canada's sector expertise strategy:

Business Event Development:

How destination organizations are succeeding at acquiring new event business by leveraging their priority sectors more intentionally and strategically in collaboration with Business Events Canada's global outreach.

Long-term Economic Development:

How a destination organization's sector expertise strategy aligns with local, regional, national government, and economic development mandates and how it performs as a catalyst to accelerate the growth of a region's innovation economy to benefit the community at large.

Ottawa Tourism, Tourism Toronto, Tourisme Montréal, Québec City Business Destination, Waterloo Region Tourism Marketing Corporation, Tourism Saskatoon, Calgary Meetings + Conventions, Explore Edmonton, Tourism Kelowna, Business Events Victoria, Tourism Yukon, and Economic Development Winnipeg.

Each organization provides a unique perspective on the future of business event strategy in advanced industries and the alignment of that strategy with economic development in their region, specific to their key sectors.

“

Tourism Saskatoon was an early adopter of the economic sector strategy. In a mid-size city, we have limited resources to promote our sectors through to an international audience. Being a partner with Business Events Canada, however, has provided us the opportunity to promote our economic sectors by participating in targeted marketing campaigns and signature events such as Innovate Canada. This partnership has allowed Saskatoon to reach an audience we have not been able to reach before.

- Brad Peters,
director of international sales,
Tourism Saskatoon

”



INNOVATE CANADA: ALIGNING BUSINESS EVENTS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Dinner table projection mapping at Innovate Canada

Business Events Canada launched the inaugural Innovate Canada event in May 2018, co-located with the C2 Montréal conference, to showcase the collective strength of Canada's Information & Communications Technology (ICT) sector to international tech executives from around the world.

Representing Canada, a broad spectrum of destination leaders, academics, and industry experts engaged the visiting executives to emphasize Canada's competitive advantage in technology, across four tracks in artificial intelligence, health tech, data mining, and digital immersion.

The Montréal Institute for Learning Algorithms (MILA) was one Canadian company that participated in Innovate Canada. Researchers from MILA pioneered the field of deep learning and deep neural networks, as well as their applications to vision, speech, and language. MILA is world-renowned for many breakthroughs in developing novel deep learning algorithms and applying them to various domains.

Element AI was another leader in machine learning at Innovate Canada. The artificial intelligence solutions provider gives organizations unparalleled access to cutting-edge technology with a renowned faculty fellow network, the largest privately-owned Canadian artificial intelligence R&D lab, and a growing network of specialized business partners.

Key to Business Events Canada's sector expertise strategy is the fact that business events are a catalyst for long-term economic growth. They drive sector collaboration and innovation across industry, academia, and government organizations; showcase local advanced industry, creative, and academic sector expertise to a global audience; act as a catalyst for new R&D partnerships, trade, and investment; attract international talent; grow high-value jobs and the resulting tax base; and motivate delegates to return as leisure visitors or residents.

As such, Innovate Canada is really a front door to Canada's surging knowledge economy that ensures the country's long-range competitiveness on the world stage.

"Our guests, many of whom were visiting Canada for the first time, told us repeatedly how much they appreciated learning about Canada's tech leadership and our many centers of excellence across the country that are driving global innovation," said Chantal Sturk-Nadeau, executive director of Business Events Canada. "Our goal was to leave an indelible impression with each and every delegate of what Canada offers for business events, trade, investment, research, development, and partnerships."

While Innovate Canada 2018 was hosted in Montréal and focused on Canada's ICT sector, subsequent events will rotate across the country to showcase expertise in the nation's other key sectors. In May 2019, Innovate Canada is moving to Toronto to focus on the city's expansive cluster in life sciences. More than 25 MedTech and Pharmaceutical C-suite executives from across the globe will be immersed in the region's life sciences ecosystem during the popular Collision Conference. (See Business Events Canada's Life Sciences sector map below.)

Innovate Canada will again feature a diverse array of educational site visits to Toronto's research institutions, startups, and businesses, as well as one-on-one meetings with representatives from Canada's life sciences centers of excellence. Before, after, and in-between, Business Events Toronto will showcase their city's unique venues, attractions, and experiences available for conferences.

Again, Business Events Canada is bringing new clients to Canada to see firsthand how the government supports the destinations' strengths, and how the hosting facilities are world class. The overall Innovate Canada experience is designed to leave an indelible impression of Canada.



*Life Sciences cluster map,
Business Events Canada*

How Business Events Drive Cross-Sector Collaboration

The Government of Canada is driving the national mission to support the growth of intellectual capital across the country in an effort to increase cities' competitive advantage in the world's most advanced fields of technology and science. The Government launched a \$1.26 billion Strategic Innovation Fund in July 2017 to "accelerate areas of economic strength... and expand the role of Canadian firms in regional and global supply chains."

That led to the development of the Innovation Superclusters Initiative that identified and funds five overarching advanced industries spread across the country, including: the Ocean Supercluster (based in Atlantic Canada); the SCALE.AI Supercluster (based in Québec); the Advanced Manufacturing Supercluster (based in Ontario); the Protein Industries Supercluster (based in the Prairies); and the Digital Technology Supercluster (based in British Columbia).

Building on that, the Canadian government launched Invest in Canada in March 2018. The federal agency has a mandate to develop and service international partnerships and investments in those clusters and other high-growth, high-tech industries.

Business Events Canada actively collaborates with Invest in Canada to help Canadian destination organizations increase their exposure among event decision-makers in

the global marketplace. One example of that was during Fortune Global Forum 2018 in Toronto, which brought together the CEOs of some of the world's biggest corporations.

"Fortune 500 CEOs are important stakeholders for many federal organizations, so Business Events Canada, Export Development Canada, and Invest in Canada worked together to present a united front on what Canada has to offer," said Sarah Albrecht, director, partnership strategy, for Invest in Canada. "As a group, we created an overarching message that allowed each organization to present its unique value propositions under one umbrella."

Invest in Canada was also active at Web Summit 2018 in Lisbon to promote the Collision tech conference in Toronto in May 2019, which was previously based in New Orleans. Collision is operated by the same group behind Web Summit. Consequently, Tourism Toronto and Web Summit signed a three-year deal to host the Summit and further elevate the city's advanced industry clusters, again recognizing that the business event was a catalyst.

"At Web Summit, we created quite a buzz and generated interest in Canada from a variety of people and businesses in the tech world," said Albrecht. "While Invest in Canada is primarily focused on potential investors, there is no question that the people we met are interested in Canada as a business destination. This is an image we can all further cultivate when Collision comes to Toronto."

Q&A WITH TARA GORDON, VP, BUSINESS EVENTS, TOURISM TORONTO



Photo: Collision Conference

Collision is North America's fastest growing technology conference, and it's moving to Toronto in 2019. Collision is the sister event to the popular Web Summit conference in Lisbon and it is expected to bring more than 90,000 attendees to Toronto over the next three years, with a combined economic impact of \$147 million.

The organizers were attracted to Toronto because it's the fastest growing technology market in the world, ranking ahead of Boston, Chicago, and Seattle in terms of tech jobs. The city also has the third largest tech sector in North America with 14,000 companies employing more than 400,000 tech professionals.

According to Tara Gordon, Vice President, Business Events at Tourism Toronto, a conference of this magnitude demonstrates how meetings and events can be a powerful catalyst for economic development in priority sectors, not just in Toronto, but across the country.

SkiftX spoke with Gordon for more insight into the connection between business events and economic development.

SkiftX: How are you positioning Toronto to business event organizers in advanced industries today?

TG: As a leader in technology, life sciences, and financial services, to name a few, Toronto is a logical destination for groups looking to meet here. This is where innovation in their industry is happening. Groups choosing the city for their meetings are poised to benefit from the conversation that is happening here in their sector, and they can benefit in a number of ways, whether that's increased sponsorship, attendance building, or programming from relevant thought leaders. Connecting with industry thought leaders and academia, conference organizers can conduct content-related site inspections and gain access to subject matter experts to recruit new talent, grow their industry membership, exchange best practices, and meet with real purpose in Toronto.

Do you have any specific case studies where you've won a bid that tipped in your favor based on the strength of your industry clusters?



Tara Gordon, Vice President, Business Events Sales & Service, Tourism Toronto

Toronto is a leader in life sciences, and with every medical bid we submit we look to capitalize on the fact that we're a center of medical excellence in Canada. We have a high concentration of teaching hospitals working in close relation to the University of Toronto and its vast research programs.

The 2018 World Conference on Lung Cancer brought leading experts dedicated to research and treatment of lung cancer and thoracic malignancies to Toronto earlier this year. The bid to bring the group to the city was bolstered by the fact that we are a world leader in lung cancer research and treatment. The conference also had a tremendous impact on advancing practice in the field by highlighting the leading work being done in Toronto and in Canada. The efforts resulted in the world's largest meeting of its kind, setting a record of around 7,500 attendees.

How do you convince local leaders in your advanced and creative industries to collaborate with you to win meetings business? What is the benefit for them?

We're really trying to create a differentiator in the marketplace when we're having conversations with organizers as to why we want the business that we're soliciting to come to our destination. The Leader's Circle is Toronto's official Ambassador Program, which plays an instrumental part in helping to bring international meetings to the city, while also providing opportunities to work with locals to bring meetings here. Top thinkers, innovators, and researchers partner with our team to form a growing network of leaders to host events in Toronto, which ultimately amplifies their life's work and research globally.

We see this truly as a partnership where we are able to work together from the initial stages of identifying the opportunities, to the bid process, and right up to the conference. The benefit for so many of these local leaders is the ability to showcase their products, innovations, and quite frankly themselves to their peers, as well as elevate the work that they are doing in their industry. Often the people we work with are just as proud of showcasing Toronto as a destination for these meetings as we are.

How will the national strategy developed by Business Events Canada further help you increase meetings business in your city?

We had already begun the sector strategy for Toronto a few years ago. But having Business Events Canada moving along the same lines and focusing on aligning our sector strategy with theirs means we have their support and marketing behind us. It certainly helps keep our team focused.

We started the sector strategy because the city has become so popular that we can't afford to go around and just try getting any kind of business into the city.

We are much more granular and much more surgical in our approach today so that we maximize the experience and opportunity for organizers, the attendees, and our community. When you bring people, who are aligned to our strength, then we can add some value to the organizing committee's content and we can expose our communities to other communities.



How was Toronto able to successfully secure Collision?

It started with a call from Mayor John Tory who had met with the owners of Collision. He contacted us and said that he wanted to go after this business and see if we could bring it to the city. The mayor has had meetings with the owners through other leaders in the technology sector in Toronto, such as the MaRS technology incubator group.

When we got involved, Toronto Global was also involved, which is a regional economic development agency. They're trying to bring businesses into our region, and we started working with Toronto Regional Board of Trade as well. So we had economic development from the city, Toronto Global, the technology community, and MaRS innovation hub, and we had the Toronto Regional board of trade.

It then expanded to include other Canadian economic development groups. So what we're trying to do is make this more than a Toronto story. We want it to be a Canada story around the world. When we went to Web Summit, recently, and Collision this past year in New Orleans, it was a Canadian contingency representing Collision for Canada. Even though Toronto is hosting it, it is a Canada story that we are trying to broadcast around the world.

Are you attempting to measure the long-term economic impact of hosting business events in your priority sectors?

That's a hard one, because we don't specifically continue following up as to what the legacy is for our events and international congresses. One thing we've done with our Leaders Circle is that we created a grant program that we have filled with a pool of a million dollars between the convention center and ourselves. We will issue grants up to \$50,000 based on the successful application by ambassadors who were successful in securing a congress for our destination. We know how much work is required for an ambassador to successfully get to the bid and host their peers and community, and they don't get paid for that.

We wanted to entice people to become ambassadors, so we have now given three \$25,000 grants to doctors and professors to further their research programs. They report to us on an interim basis and then one year later on the results of their research. It's not directly related to having hosted the event in the city, but it really is all tied into the program.



CASE STUDY: BUSINESS EVENTS CANADA AND TOURISME MONTRÉAL WIN NEW WORLD SUMMIT AI EVENT



World AI Summit, Amsterdam

Montréal will host the World Summit AI Americas for four consecutive years from 2019 through 2022, with the expectation that the event will eventually host 6,000 participants in the last year.

London-based InspiredMinds, which launched the original World AI Summit in Amsterdam in 2017, was looking to create a sister event in North America. Canada wasn't originally considered in the initial pool of prospects, but that changed during London Tech Week in June 2018.

Introduced by the Canadian Trade Commissioners in London during London Tech Week, Business Events Canada met with InspiredMinds to showcase the wealth of Canadian industry and academic expertise in artificial intelligence. That meeting secured the lead for World Summit AI Americas due to Business Events Canada profiling the strength of the AI cluster in Canada. Following London Tech Week, the organization connected various Canadian DMMOs and InspiredMinds.

Tourisme Montréal was eager to bid on this event to further elevate its standing in the world of machine learning. The organization hosted Lucy Rothwell, managing director of InspiredMinds, and her team in September 2018. She was invited to scope out the city and meet with people like Yoshua Bengio, lead professor of the Department of Computer Science and Operations Research at the University of Montréal. Bengio is considered one of the world's top leading experts in advancing artificial intelligence.

"Lucy didn't care about hotels and that type of thing. She wanted to meet with leaders from the artificial intelligence industry," said Guy-Joffroy Lord, director of business events for Tourisme Montréal. "So we accompanied her to about 15 visits with stakeholders from the AI cluster, as well as potential sponsors from various economic sector development agencies and financial institutions."

For Tourisme Montréal, providing potential sponsorship opportunities was as important as connecting Rothwell and her colleagues with the city's AI cluster.

"We handed these people the business proposal from World AI Summit and we told them, 'Look, we're going to introduce you to the people from the AI Summit. They're coming to visit Montréal. They're considering our city to host this great conference that will attract more than 5,000 people eventually, and help us grow our sectors significantly, and they will ask you for money. They are here to find support



to make sure that we have the right ecosystem to accommodate their needs."

Lord said that the fact that his office briefed the people that Rothwell was scheduled to meet was very helpful, because the expectations were managed about the bigger economic development story that would benefit Montréal in the long run. The sheer variety of meetings was also important.

Tourisme Montréal introduced Rothwell to potential funders, potential partners, and potential speakers. The DMMO hosted meetings with AI cluster organizations in Montréal, such as Element AI, IVADO data management, and a few incubators of AI startups, all of which contribute to Montréal's status as a global deep learning hub.

"Finally, InspiredMinds chose Montréal as the destination to host the first four years of their conference starting next year," explained Lord. "We were super happy and proud. It was a very interesting learning experience for us because of the way we organized that city tour and the site visits. I think it's the way of the future for us. It's the way we want to do business."

CASE STUDY: IMPACT SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE AND CLEAN TECH FAM TRIP, BRITISH COLUMBIA



IMPACT Sustainability, Travel & Tourism Conference

In January, Destination Greater Victoria hosted its second annual IMPACT Sustainability, Travel & Tourism Conference, bringing together leaders in business, technology, engineering, tourism, and academia to discuss the long-term viability of global mobility and connectivity. It is the first dedicated conference of its kind in North America, bringing together the regional visitor economy and knowledge base.

Meanwhile, Business Events Canada launched its first-ever business development familiarization trip designed around the organization's sector expertise strategy, which it co-located with IMPACT. Focused on clean technology, Business Events Canada's trip connected leading institutions and companies in Victoria and Burnaby, British Columbia with a number of international executives who source destinations and organize events for the global renewables energy sector.

Destination Greater Victoria and Tourism Burnaby were critical for engaging the local industry and startup leaders in clean tech to make introductions and help develop the itinerary.

In Victoria, the Business Events Canada group met with faculty at the new \$9.5 million (CDN) Ocean-Climate Building at the University of Victoria (UVic), which officially opened January 10, 2019 to "deepen the world's knowledge for a sustainable future." The new complex provides physical space for collaborations among one of Canada's largest concentrations of climate and ocean researchers in biology, geography, earth and ocean sciences, environmental studies, biochemistry, business, law, history, and electrical, computer, mechanical, and civil engineering. "Our programs of research and education

respond to our planet's major issues, including those related to our air, water, and land — the vital elements of our planet that are fundamental to our future," said Jamie Cassels, president of UVic. "Knowledge about those three ingredients of life — how they are changing, how they are interacting within complex ecosystems, and how we interact with them — is essential to the world."

UVic also hosts research and knowledge-sharing institutes focused exclusively on ocean and climate, such as the Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium, the Institute for Integrated Energy Systems, and the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, which is a collaboration with British Columbia's three other research-intensive universities hosted and led by UVic.

In Burnaby, participating companies included Schneider Electric, which is driving the "digital transformation of energy management and automation in homes, buildings, data centers, infrastructure, and industries."

The Business Events Canada group also met with the Inventys carbon capture company, dedicated to "advancing a successful transition to a low carbon economy by building a carbon dioxide marketplace through distributed carbon dioxide supply.



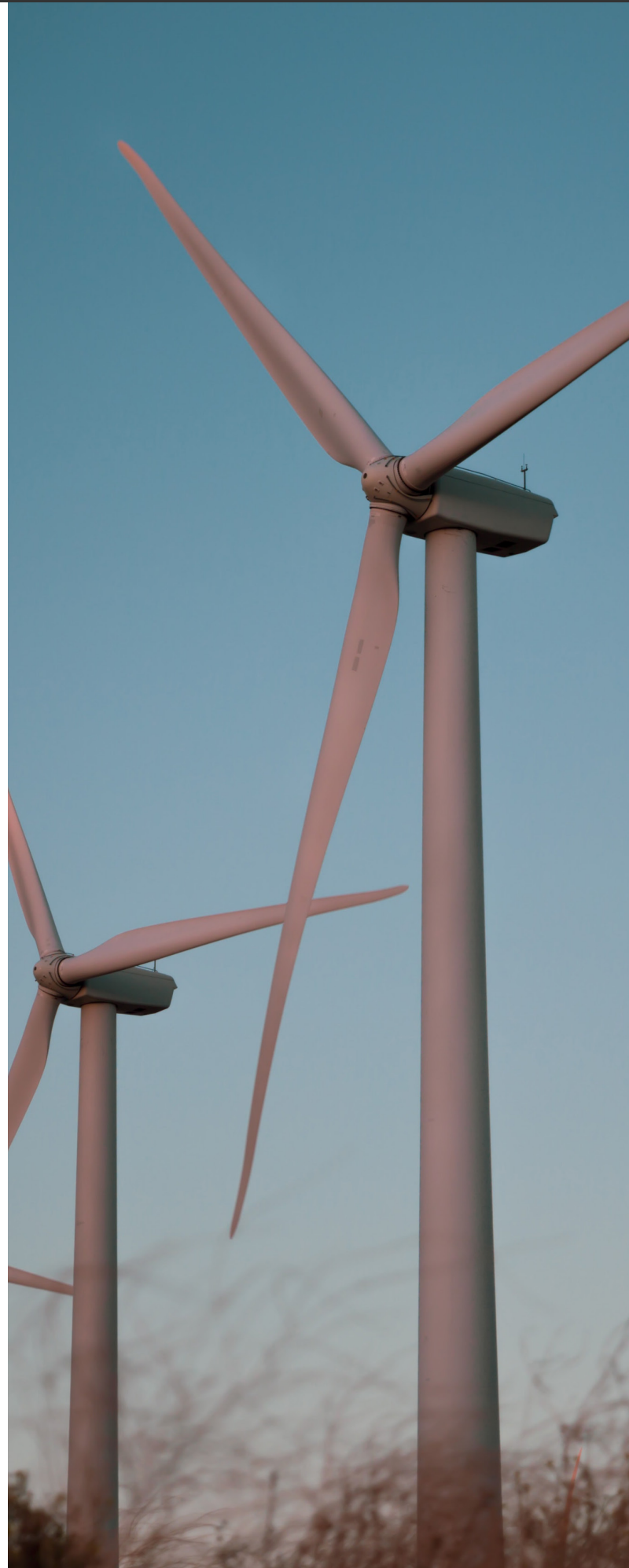
"Originally, Tourism Victoria and Tourism Burnaby, our two partners for this business development event, said that this was somewhat out of their comfort zone because they were now starting to work with new partners," said Virginie De Visscher, director of business development - economic sectors for Business Events Canada. "This forced them to reach out to their community, but it also actually reinforced their position within their destination by bringing together new potential partners in new industry sectors."

Courtney Galatioto, VP of stakeholder relations for the Alliance to Save Energy, based in Washington, D.C., participated in the clean tech fam. The organization works to influence and leverage U.S. energy policy by developing partnerships with the private sector, and it hosts numerous business events worldwide in large and mid-size cities.

"Our visit was really interesting because it was intimate and had a specific scope narrowing in on clean tech, which is not typical," said Galatioto. "That helps us better understand the opportunities to grow partnerships. We knew theoretically that British Columbia is a hub of innovation in clean tech, but we didn't realize the scope of resources and innovation available until we had a chance to see it in action."

Galatioto added that "it can be really easy" to always just target large global cities for events because organizations like hers know what to expect, and everyone in the big markets is familiar with who's who in their sectors.

"But this trip with Business Events Canada opened me up to the fact that we should be looking at different tier cities, and we should be looking at universities and manufacturers other people might not be talking to," she said. "The people and places we visited, like Schneider's R&D facility and Inventys, want to show off their work. That's great for us because we can really leverage that innovation to improve engagement with our members."



Q&A WITH RYAN KUFFNER, VP OF SALES & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WINNIPEG



Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Winnipeg

In Winnipeg, the tourism, business events and business development organizations are all housed and interconnected under the umbrella organization of Economic Development Winnipeg.

According to Ryan Kuffner, VP of sales & business development at Economic Development Winnipeg, that convergence of resources provides inherent advantages when it comes to securing events in the city's priority sectors, such as Nutraceuticals, which relates to increasing nutrients in food sources.

SkiftX spoke with Kuffner for specifics about how the various departments work together to leverage business events and drive growth in advanced industries.

SkiftX: Why are Tourism Winnipeg and Economic Development Winnipeg connected the way they are, and how are you developing your business event strategy to catalyze long-term growth?

RK: This is a global theme where convention and visitor bureaus, or destination marketing organizations, are working more closely with their economic development organizations to pool their resources and insight to align their interests. The value of our two shops being integrated is significant to us.

Ryan Kuffner, VP of Sales & Business Development,
Economic Development Winnipeg



First, there's an immediate depth of understanding and access to deep resources within the organization of what our key assets and competitive advantages are in some of our top sectors. So our tourism team can tap into a team of sectoral business experts literally by turning their chairs around and asking the key questions. That provides us with the ability to develop bids to attract particular business events here that are strong in our sectors.

Second, when we're attracting business events here, oftentimes we leverage our top minds in research and development, or innovation in particular areas of business here. Therefore, the tourism team would be able to tap into a lot of those experts that are highly specialized in their fields. And when we're under a deadline to deliver or to submit a bid or an RFP for a particular event, it allows us again to work together to ensure they have the best possible information in terms of our assets. Those include our business assets, investment assets, research assets, and some of those top minds and experts in their fields.

Is there an example of Winnipeg businesses that are using local events to boost their growth?

In 2018 we attracted the 2018 Congress of the International Society of Nutrigenetics and Nutrigenomics. Our bid was successful because we've got a real strength in this area of functional foods and nutraceuticals, led by the Richardson Center for Functional Foods and Nutraceuticals here. The opportunity to host that conference brought in top minds, top researchers, and companies that are involved in this space that have business models that are contingent on staying on top of developments in the field.

That event allowed us not just to showcase Richardson Center for Functional Foods and Nutraceuticals here in town, but also all of the many companies and innovations that are taking place in the jurisdiction.

Do you try to measure the long-term economic impact of events like that?

In terms of legacy impact, yes, we'll be monitoring those. Do we have concrete outcomes of that yet? No, we do not, but we do certainly expect them to occur. We're really only now exploring the full potential of what's possible here. Moving forward, we're looking at sending a business development manager responsible for the science or agribusiness sector to important business events to leverage and understand what organizations are in the loop for potential legacy impacts. There are organic legacy impacts that we believe will take place regardless just by virtue of the relationships and the linkages made during an event like this. But there are also opportunities for us to be proactive.

Have you found that aligning business events and economic development strategy is increasing Winnipeg's exposure in key industries like nutraceuticals?

The crux of the strategy applies to those people involved in various sectors who are strong

influencers in sourcing destinations for their events. They slide through Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal all the time. They know Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal. For the most part, they don't know Winnipeg. We're under the radar. However, we're doing very interesting and innovative work in a whole variety of different business sectors. We've got some real competitive advantages, but we don't have the same opportunities that some of Canada's largest jurisdictions have to capture the focus of global leaders in their business sectors.

So, Business Events Canada gives people a reason to come to Winnipeg in a particular sector where they know we have strength. They've built the door for us to showcase our business assets, our investment assets, and what we're doing in the context of innovation and R&D that will help the event coming here. We wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to showcase that, while I think places like Toronto, Montréal, Vancouver have those opportunities more frequently. We need to give people a reason to come to Winnipeg. Once they're here, we can wow them with what we're doing, and business events are a critical piece to that.



THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF BUSINESS EVENTS IN ADVANCED INDUSTRIES



A handful of large and midsize cities across Canada are home to a world-class innovation economy thriving in both private industry and their public institutions. Their DMMOs — Ottawa Tourism, Explore Edmonton, Tourism Saskatoon, Calgary Meetings + Conventions, and Business Events Victoria — are all engaging meeting and event organizers with a new story to tell about their wealth of leadership in specific advanced industries.

Some of the organizations are further along in developing their sector expertise strategy, and continued work needs to be done in terms of communicating the value proposition to international buyers. However, they all say they benefit from closer collaboration with Business Events Canada and their key stakeholders in STEM industries to reposition their destinations in the global meetings marketplace.

OTTAWA TOURISM: AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES, AEROSPACE, AND DEFENSE

Ottawa is fast becoming known as a leader in high-tech industries due to the city's culture of global policy-making, entrepreneurship, research, and development. Canada's capital city boasts a modern-day innovation track record including the former networking giant Nortel and companies who developed the operating systems for BlackBerry and Netflix. Other key sectors include autonomous vehicles, aerospace, defense..

Key institutions include the National Research Council, which is Canada's largest research organization. And the two main academic centers of excellence, the University of Ottawa and Carleton University, both work closely with the private sector.

Affiliated with the two universities, Kanata North Technology Park clusters 500-plus technology companies in industries including ICT, advanced manufacturing, GovTech, aerospace and defense, autonomous vehicle software, and cleantech. The complex is home to 21,000 highly educated knowledge workers and strong inter-company

linkages, generating billions in GDP for the Canadian economy. For example, BlackBerry QNX is a leader in software development for autonomous vehicles.

Ottawa Tourism has established deep relationships with these industries to help attract business events in those sectors, which in turn helps support the global reach of their respective organization.

"We work closely with Invest Ottawa, a major economic development organization which has promoted our knowledge-based industries for the past several years," said Lesley Mackay, vice president of meetings and events for Ottawa Tourism. "And we absolutely support the national strategy being led by Business Events Canada, which has a large international reach and influence in educating international meeting decision makers on the strength of our local knowledge-based industries. By positioning ourselves as sector leaders, we believe that meeting planners will recognize the opportunity to leverage our ecosystems to increase attendance, find speakers, develop sessions, and more."

Mackay says the role of DMMOs in business events is evolving significantly in the coming years, where they'll need to have as much knowledge about the local innovation economy as they do the visitor economy.

Cosmodome, Laval, Québec



"We work with professional meeting planners and what we call 'accidental' planners," said Mackay. "The latter are local scientists, doctors, researchers and executives seeking to bring in a conference. Their expertise is in their fields, not in planning and organizing conferences. Even bidding guidelines can be daunting, which can potentially overwhelm or discourage interest. It's really a complement of strengths: We do the legwork and heavy-lifting so they can best showcase their work."

To support those efforts, Mikayla Palladino, meetings researcher for Ottawa Tourism, serves as liaison with Ottawa's knowledge community for meeting and event clients.

"We partner with Invest Ottawa and our convention venue, the Shaw Centre, on Think Ottawa, our program for uncovering local ambassadors," explained Palladino. "It's about raising awareness within the Ottawa knowledge and academic community on meeting and conference opportunities. For some, it's an education, but they generally don't require much convincing. We stay in touch as they marinate the idea, and before long, we've converted another person to our sales force. We also work with a UK contractor to connect with international opportunities."

Ottawa has also made champions out of clients, such as the IEEE technical professional organization, which has more than 423,000 members in over 160 countries.

"From advanced wireless systems to AI, IEEE vitally contributes to society," said Mackay. "When people meet face-to-face with IEEE, good things happen. We fully support their efforts, and in turn, IEEE fully recognizes Ottawa's value proposition. They contact Ottawa first with conference opportunities now."

Upcoming IEEE conferences on the Ottawa calendar are the definition of future-forward. In 2019, Ottawa welcomes the IEEE International

Conference on Wireless for Space and Extreme Environments, as well as the IEEE International Conference on Information Fusion. In 2021, Ottawa will host the IEEE Nuclear and Space Radiation Effects Conference.

"Along with the hospitals and research labs, we also have this massive engine of the government helping to support and drive business to Ottawa," said Mackay. "While still fairly new to the sector-driven approach, we are a well-oiled engine that is making impact across Canada and securing our fair share of wins. The Business Events Canada strategy makes perfect sense, creating a one-stop shop for promoting the Canadian brand in high-tech industries globally."

EXPLORE EDMONTON: MEDICAL IMAGING AND NANOTECHNOLOGY

Five organizations, including Edmonton Tourism, make up the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC), so the city is well versed in how to align business event and advanced industry development. Alberta's capital city began tapping into its local knowledge sectors to drive business event sales about three years ago.

"It's something we should have been doing even earlier," said Anna Look, director of meetings and conventions for Explore Edmonton, which is the public-facing brand responsible for developing the local visitor economy. "We had all the resources at our fingertips but had yet to realize the full potential of a meetings and event-themed economic approach."

The sector expertise strategy is clearly changing the role of the modern DMMO, especially in terms of expanding beyond the traditional sales model. Edmonton's structure is a clear illustration of that.

Also part of the EEDC, Enterprise Edmonton supports inbound foreign investors and outbound local businesses in global growth and expansion initiatives. It's comprised of four innovation and entrepreneur communities, including Startup Edmonton and the Edmonton Research Park.

Meanwhile, Innovate Edmonton fosters the growth of the local tech and medical sectors, and Corporate Services provides finance, IT, human resource, market intelligence, and marketing services to all divisions. And lastly, the Shaw Conference Centre and Edmonton EXPO Centre are also operated by the EEDC.

However, according to Look, Business Events Canada's sector expertise strategy has helped Explore Edmonton leverage its local innovation economy more effectively to secure important business events.

"Before partnering with Business Events Canada, we were not working our inter-divisional communication channels to the utmost," she said. "Business Events Canada has since helped us drive cross-channel collaboration faster than we could have done on our own."

One example of that, Edmonton participated in Business Events Canada's inaugural Innovate Canada conference co-located with C2 Montréal in May 2018, themed around the global ICT sector.

"That was my first time traveling to promote Edmonton with a senior sales executive from Enterprise Edmonton," explained Look. "Putting his foreign direct investment knowledge together with my experience on the meetings side proved vital in conversations throughout the event. It pushed us to think quicker and understand the level to which we could support each other."

The event and Business Events Canada partnership overall have boosted Edmonton's confidence and sense of purpose, as well.

"We have no illusions as to our normal competitive standing as a mid-size city," said Look. "Innovate Canada changed that by putting us the same playing field as the biggest cities in Canada. We were given the opportunity to showcase our strengths and be taken seriously by stakeholders we would not have engaged before. Now, Enterprise Edmonton brings us business event leads, and we introduce key industry players visiting Edmonton to them."

The major traction to date has come from the local healthcare and AI sectors. For example, Health City is a cluster of companies driving healthcare innovations in sub-sectors such as medical imaging and nanotechnology. To exploit that expertise, Explore Edmonton is currently engaging influencers from its local nanotechnology cluster to attract conference business from the IEEE Nanotechnology Council.



Also, the University of Alberta's computer science department is highly ranked in the world for AI research, which has helped to attract an influx of international companies to Edmonton in recent years. The most notable is UK-based DeepMind, acquired by Google in 2014, which chose Edmonton for its first international lab.

DeepMind co-founder and CEO Demis Hassabis blogged, "It was a big decision for us to open our first non-U.K. research lab, and the fact we're doing so in Edmonton is a sign of the deep admiration and respect we have for the Canadian research community."

The DeepMind move has amped Edmonton's overall credibility because AI is having a big impact in attracting startups, especially in healthcare.

"We are leveraging DeepMind's AI story to capture interest across all sectors," said Look. "Alberta Health Services is Canada's largest integrated health provider, incorporating some 4,500 different health businesses serving around four million people. Their data offers a huge field for companies looking to test new AI-based technology in Edmonton."

TOURISM SASKATOON: LIFE SCIENCES AND BIO- TECHNOLOGY

The Canadian Light Source (CLS) facility in Saskatoon is one of the largest facilities in the world devoted to synchrotron x-ray science, which provides insight into the microstructure and chemical properties of materials. The interdisciplinary center is a cutting-edge venue that attracts leading experts for academic and industrial research in wide-ranging fields such as life sciences, bio-technology, and infectious diseases.

Meanwhile, the University of Saskatchewan is also advancing innovation in health research at the VIDO-InterVac Centre (Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization International Vaccine). The facility is a global leader in developing vaccines and technologies to prevent and control human and animal infectious disease threats.

Tourism Saskatoon started looking at how to use those research centers to engage business event organizers in those priority sectors several years ago.



"We're asking ourselves, 'How can we leverage these resources to bring international business to the city by linking these sectors to our meetings and events industry?'" said Brad Peters, director of international sales for Tourism Saskatoon. It was sound in principle, but as a tier-two city with limited resources, you don't just host international conferences. We would need support to promote Saskatoon to the world."

"As early adopters of the national Business Events Canada strategy, we have gained new ways to promote the hosting of scientific business events in Saskatoon," said Peters. "We participated in their targeted marketing campaigns and signature events, such as Innovate Canada, and that has allowed us to introduce Saskatoon to an audience that had previously been out of reach."

Tourism Saskatoon has collaborated with Business Events Canada to showcase events like the fifth annual International One Health Congress, held in June 2018 at the University of Saskatchewan. One Health is a global research platform studying the interconnectivity of human and animal ecosystem health, bringing together more than 150 researchers from 18 universities, and more than 10 industry partners. Saskatoon was the first North American city to host the event.

Peters said the alignment with the Business Events Canada strategy heralds a new era of confidence for Saskatoon.

"To inspire economic development opportunities for Saskatoon, each conference that we bid on or host needs to align with our priority sectors so that we can continue to build our awareness of our city, its business and academic strengths, and Saskatchewan overall," said Peters. "Broadly speaking, business events are an opportunity to showcase our research in life sciences and bio-technology to the world, exchange ideas, and give delegates a flavor of what it's like live, work, or study here."

MEETINGS + CONVENTIONS CALGARY: ENERGY AND AGRI-BUSINESS

Canada's third-largest city is the corporate epicenter of the country's energy industry, fueled by the world's third-largest oil reserves. According to the Calgary Economic Development office, two-thirds of the city's 115 head offices are connected to the energy and oilfield services sector. Calgary is home to one in seven Canadian corporate headquarters, the highest per capita nationwide.

Alberta's agricultural economy is another priority sector. Home to nearly half (42 percent) of the national herd, the province is a global leader in beef cattle. Calgary has also emerged as an innovative leader in agri-business, including food processing, smart agriculture, crop sciences and, animal genetics.

Calgary was ranked fourth globally in the Economist Intelligence Unit's 2018 annual survey of the world's most livable cities. With 60 percent of Calgarians holding post-secondary degrees, the workforce is among Canada's youngest and brightest. Supporting institutions include the University of Calgary and Olds College.

Key business event venues include downtown's TELUS Convention Centre and the BMO Centre. Located at the Calgary Stampede complex, the latter is Calgary's largest meetings facility. Spanning more than six football fields, the venue was conditionally approved for a \$500 million mega-expansion in December 2018.

Both venues are directly aligned with Meetings + Conventions Calgary, which was established in 2008 to attract citywide conventions and other group business. In 2013, the bureau launched its Calgary Champion ambassador program for local business and academic leaders to bring conferences in their fields to Calgary.



Peace Bridge, Calgary

“At the time, we were pursuing international events the same way we went after other group business, by selling the destination,” said Dave Sclanders, executive director of Meetings + Conventions Calgary. “Missing were local evangelists who could passionately promote Calgary’s industry knowledge and expertise as the compelling reason to come. So, reframing our value proposition around Calgary’s sector strengths measurably improved our traction for international events.”

Key energy sector wins to date include the Society of Petroleum Engineers’ Annual Technical Conference & Exhibition (ATCE). Scheduled for fall 2019 at the BMO Centre, it’s Canada’s first-ever hosting of the 90-year annual meeting. Diversifying beyond oil and gas, Calgary also attracted the Canadian Wind Energy Association’s globally significant Annual Conference and Exhibition in October 2018, and annual Solar Canada Conference & Exposition for May 2019.

While Meetings + Conventions Calgary has successfully leveraged the area’s innovation economy to attract high-level business events and drive economic development, the organization pivoted its strategy last year to align more closely with Business Events Canada’s model.

“We are just starting to pack the snowball,” said Sclanders. “When we started Calgary Champions, we’d look at the ICCA (International Congress and

Convention Association) calendar for upcoming industry matches geared to our sweet spot of 500 to 1,500 delegates, and then seek a local champion. Now, working with De Visscher and the Business Events Canada approach, we’ve turned the funnel around. While we’re still looking for industry openings, we also look at opportunities in energy, agri-business and other sectors where we have champions to help spearhead the process. It will take time, but the goal is to get that snowball running downhill.”

Driving economic development from business events is the other major aspiration. For Sclanders, the ideal situation is bringing in business leaders and conference attendees and raising their awareness and appreciation of Calgary as a match for their own business goals and ambitions.

“We want to foster the idea that Calgary is the place to incubate, grow, expand, relocate, or otherwise become part of the fabric,” he said. “We see that as a two-part consideration. Once, business events lagged tourism. Now, business events drive tourism. It’s a convention that often first brings people to town. Accordingly, marketing Calgary’s qualities as a destination remains an important part. The second piece is showcasing our sector strength, intellectual capabilities, and strong economic ecosystem. Together, that’s the marriage we are looking to achieve through the Business Events Canada strategy.”

BUSINESS EVENTS VICTORIA: OCEAN AND MARINE SCIENCE

Long established as a leader in maritime innovation and sustainability, Victoria's coastal waters support multiple interrelated marine-based industries and subsectors. These include advanced technologies such as underwater acoustic, imaging and propulsion systems; marine transportation; and sustainable shipbuilding and repair.

The commercial sector strongly integrates with Greater Victoria's research and academic institutions, which include the University of Victoria's School of Earth and Ocean Sciences, and the Institute of Ocean Sciences in nearby Sydney.

Victoria's ecosystem also includes a significant cluster of internationally renowned researchers and experts in the ocean sciences and marine technologies. Major players include the Seaspan Marine Corporation with shipyards handling Canada's multi-billion-dollar fleet renewal program.

To date, Victoria has seen a trickle of conference business from the marine sector. Tapping into the Business Events Canada program is raising expectations for a steadier flow.

"We've emulated the strategy to a point, but opportunities generally came in more by chance than by design," said Miranda Ji, vice president of sales for Business Events Victoria and the Victoria Conference Centre. "The Business Events Canada collaboration began with Virginie De Visscher's visit here. She met with key local industry leaders and discussed strengths and opportunities in depth. Emerging from those conversations was clarified focus and a strategy aligned with the Business Events Canada model. For our purposes, the spearheads are our marine industry and our other priority sector, cleantech."



Ji added that “Business Events Canada’s marketing support, which includes working together to create promotional collateral and presentations, is raising our sector-driven business events potential to the level it needs to be.”

Locally, the focus going forward is expanding local awareness and buy-in.

“The key decision-makers and influencers we’ve reached so far are on board with the value proposition and think it’s a great idea,” said Ji. “There’s still work to do though. Our efforts now are on communicating how the strategy links to meetings and conferences and getting people to engage.”

With its Local Host ambassador program already in place, Business Events Victoria has been most successful reaching into Victoria’s academic community. “We are now thinking about developing a speaking circuit for me and our CEO Paul Nursey to connect with business and sector leaders,” said Ji. “It’s not hard to know who to talk to or getting them

to listen. The challenge for some people centers on a perceived lack of time and bandwidth to get involved. That’s our opportunity to educate them on the economic stakes at hand, including the leaders and delegates they can expect to attract.”

Hosted at the Victoria Conference Centre in January 2019, the second annual IMPACT Sustainability Travel & Tourism Conference provided “a collaborative national dialogue on innovation and the contribution of tourism to Canada’s sustainable future.”

Ji and her team are leveraging this showcase event as a prime business development opportunity.

“While not as dominant as our marine presence, our cleantech sector is definitely growing,” she said. “With something of a parallel to the theme of sustainability, we have partnered with Virginie De Visscher and Business Events Canada to bring in cleantech industry planners. The idea is to connect the ideas and possibilities in action, and we are excited about the prospects.”

University of Victoria’s School of Earth and Ocean Sciences



EMERGING BUSINESS EVENT MARKETS ARE GROWING THEIR ADVANCED INDUSTRIES



Positioning a destination around its innovation economy and cluster strengths is not just a strategy for larger cities anymore because of the rise of high-tech startups everywhere. The Waterloo Region Tourism Marketing Corporation, Tourism Yukon, and Tourism Kelowna illustrate how smaller DMMOs are evolving by providing access to their local thought leaders in niche sectors, ranging from mining to sustainable wine growing.

In today's global economy, almost all destinations with any industry to speak of can provide meeting and event organizers with access to knowledge-based organizations. That additive value proposition and competitive advantage can be the difference to convert national and international buyers seeking ways to enrich their programming and increase ROI.

WATERLOO REGION TOURISM MARKETING CORPORATION: QUANTUM COMPUTING AND AUTO TECH

Forming the western end of the nearly 70-mile long Toronto-Waterloo Innovation Corridor, the Waterloo Region is eminently qualified for its global close-up via Business Events Canada's sector expertise strategy.

The cluster, second largest in North America, employs 200,000 knowledge workers in 15,000 tech companies. With 5,200 startups, it's North America's leading startup destination per capita, and second in the world for startup density. In 2016, McKinsey & Company wrote that this "nascent technology supercluster has the potential to become one of the world's top innovation ecosystems."

Waterloo's powerhouse pillars include Communitech — a private/public innovation hub supporting 1,400

tech companies. Velocity is the world's largest free start-up incubator, and Canada's most productive tech incubator. Catalyst137 is the world's largest Internet of Things manufacturing space, and Grand Innovations is an applied innovation center emphasizing technology-enabled advanced manufacturing and cybersecurity.

As reported by the Financial Post in late 2017, Waterloo added 8,400 tech jobs from 2011 to 2016, a 65.6 percent increase and second fastest growth rate in North America after Charlotte, North Carolina. The University of Waterloo is another talent engine. Offering Canada's top engineering program and second-ranked computer science program, the university boasts the world's largest concentration of math and computer science talent.

Google Canada, one of several top international and Canadian technology companies headquartered in Waterloo, hires directly from the university, which also partners on The Accelerator Centre, one of the world's top-five university-linked accelerators. Quantum physics is yet another priority tech sector, supported by cluster partners like Quantum Valley Investments.

True North Conference



"The Innovation Corridor is attracting a lot of attention in Canada, which we want to capitalize on as much as we can," said Minto Schneider, CEO of the Waterloo Regional Tourism Marketing Corporation. "In terms of developing a business events-related strategy tied to our priority ICT and quantum computing sectors, we feel that the critical mass is not quite there yet. That's where we're looking to strengthen our profile and positioning via the Business Events Canada partnership."

Although, Waterloo is gaining traction to build upon. Since 2016, the Waterloo Centre for Automotive Research (WatCAR) has partnered with the Waterloo Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to host the annual AutoTech Symposium at the University of Waterloo. Growing in attendance year over year, the conference connects Ontario-based automotive technology companies with global automotive decision-makers in the areas of security software, artificial intelligence, and automation.

Another anchor is True North. Inaugurated in 2018, this two-day conference, hosted by Communitech, attracted more than 2,000 influencers, innovators, and policymakers for crucial conversations about the future of tech. With plans to annualize the conference, the 2019 edition is expected to draw double the attendance.

As Waterloo formally activates the Business Events Canada strategy, Schneider says her organization will be more proactive in engaging the local clusters.

"We are hoping to fund research into our sector specialists and champions via increased room taxes or destination marketing fees," she explained. "We generally know who the leaders are, but this will help us deepen the reach and the conversation. In terms of value proposition, we will appeal to the strong local pride of place and achievement. It represents a great sharing opportunity for our community."

With a current conference sweet spot of between 250 and 750 delegates, Waterloo can ramp up to

1,000-plus events in the academic off-season. The DMMO is partnering with Tourism Toronto and the Metro Toronto Convention Center to capture overflow and make sure that smaller groups do not leave the region.

"As we now engage with Business Events Canada and partners from across Canada, the opportunity is there to scale up on infrastructure and capacity," Schneider said. "In June 2019, for example, we are joining our colleagues from Communitech and the Waterloo EDC together with the Business Events Canada Team at the AI Summit during London Tech Week for the first time. As a combined force, we can make contacts that are capable of bringing a conference or even opening a business in the Waterloo Region. It's an increased profile and show of strength that we are very excited about."

TOURISM YUKON: MINING, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Dating back to the 1896 gold rush along the Klondike River in these parts, the Yukon Territory has had a rich metal resource economy, with active mining operations for gold, zinc, copper, tungsten, platinum, and silver. And since 2016, the Yukon has attracted more than US\$600 million in investment from global mining giants including Goldcorp, Newmont Mining, Barrick Gold, and Agnico Eagle.

The Government of Yukon is fully behind this priority sector, which generates roughly one-fifth of total economic output for the territory. Energetic support includes spending the most per capita among Canadian jurisdictions on direct financial incentives for mining exploration, and actively promoting its mineral resources to world markets. Ernst & Young ranks Canada as the world's leading investment destination for mining.

Locally and globally, the Yukon mining story is well known. In most other respects, Canada's smallest and westernmost territory is otherwise something of a secret within Canada itself. For Alida Munro, managing director of the Yukon Convention Bureau, getting the word out nationally is part of the appeal of the Business Events Canada strategy.

"Lacking the resources to promote our business events industry nationally and internationally, we are often overlooked within Canada," said Munro. "What we have done well is heavily market ourselves within the Yukon. Through regular public events, FAM tours, and outreach, we have made significant strides in connecting and engaging with the Yukon business community. People understand and embrace the value. I'd say a good 60 percent of our conferences are originated by local ambassadors."

Looking ahead, Munro will be relying on the Business Events Canada strategy to help elevate broader national and global awareness of the Yukon's considerable offerings. "Being on the

Business Events Canada platform stands to help dispel some myths and misperceptions about our story and boost our standing in the meetings and events consideration set," she said.

Presently, the capital city of Whitehorse attracts research organizations and corporate groups engaged in geology, metallurgy, mining tech, and natural resource management. In the future, Munro hopes to attract other investment-ready and expanding industries to the Yukon.

"Down the line, we have a number of other emerging areas of competitive interest, such as Ice Age paleontology, for example," she said. "That uniquely combines with our expertise in mining through heavy permafrost. Recently, we uncovered a perfectly preserved wolf cub estimated to be 50,000 years old. It's the oldest animal specimen ever found. That's one highly specialized area on which to build research, science, and conferencing. Other emerging sectors related to our geology and environment include ice patch archeology and climate change adaptation."

Yukon Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining





TOURISM KELOWNA: AGRICULTURE AND VITICULTURE

About 40 minutes east of Vancouver by air, Kelowna is the principal city of central British Columbia's scenic Okanagan Valley, the third largest urban center in the province and home to Canada's 10th busiest airport.

Aside from tourism, the city's primary economic sectors are the well-established agriculture and viticulture (wine growing) industries. Fruit farms are big business here, and there are more than 300 wineries across the Okanagan Valley.

Supporting those industries, the University of British Columbia Okanagan (UBOC) is comprised of 18 research centers, including dedicated departments for both viticulture and agricultural technologies. In addition to that, Okanagan College and local organizations like the Summerland Research and Development Centre, UBOC are the forefront of

research-backed advances in climate change, crop yield, water management, and pest mitigation.

According to the Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission (COEDC), Kelowna has a track record of hosting winter agricultural conferences and occasional wine conferences. To date, Tourism Kelowna hasn't really had a strategic methodology for aligning its business event and economic development initiatives. That, however, is changing as Kelowna prepares to link its efforts to Business Event Canada's sector expertise strategy.

"Historically, our office has not done the best job in connecting with local industry leaders to drive meetings and conference business," said Jennifer Horsnell, director of business & destination development for Tourism Kelowna. "Our priority, then, with Business Event Canada's assistance, will be to broaden our base of economic ambassadors. With agricultural meetings typically taking place in winter, we will also look to create more events and drive more room nights and economic impact in that seasonal period."

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Business Events Canada's strategy to attract conferences in advanced industries by promoting specific key clusters in cities across the country aligns with a global trend among the most progressive destination organizations worldwide. With the cities and respective sectors now identified, Business Events Canada can connect international decision-makers with Canadian destinations in a much more strategic way. However, as in other countries, there is an ongoing and continual need to educate international buyers about how those cluster strengths can tangibly and specifically benefit their stakeholders and attendees, drive higher sponsorship and attendance figures, and deliver greater ROI for the host companies and organizations.
2. Central to the sector expertise strategy to drive business event growth, DMMO leaders are collaborating more intentionally and strategically with their local economic development organizations. When leaders in Canada's visitor economy align their mandates and strategies with those who are working to strengthen the local innovation economy, everyone benefits. This type of collaboration is most effective when municipal government leaders understand and support the sector expertise strategy to ensure buy-in from the broadest range of stakeholders beyond the hospitality and tourism industry.
3. International buyers are not making their decisions about where to host conferences in advanced industries based on the hotel package and convention center infrastructure. In a country like Canada, those are expected to be modern, world-class ecosystems. Therefore, DMMOs are now advocating internally more than ever before to educate local stakeholders about how their role is evolving in the global meetings and events marketplace. Strategic and robust community engagement via both live and virtual forums is critical to ensure there's strong coalition among the public and private sectors around a shared economic development vision for the future.
4. Many leaders in the visitor economy are still showing the impact of their DMMOs in terms of direct, short-term economic spend, such as hotel room night counts. More needs to be done for destination organizations to be able to communicate the long-term, more intangible benefits of business events in advanced industries for the local community. These legacy impacts include: attracting outside talent and investment; forging new international business partnerships and research development; elevating the destination brand reputation on a world stage, supporting workforce development for local STEM organizations and research institutions, and driving subsequent leisure tourism volume. Presently, there are few DMMOs that can communicate those bigger themes to local constituents, which means the business event industry is leaving money on the table.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Business Events Canada

Virginie De Visscher
Director of Business Development -
Economic Sectors
virginie.devisscher@businesseventscanada.ca

Ottawa Tourism

Lesley Mackay
Vice President, Meetings and Major Events
lmackay@ottawatourism.ca

Meetings + Conventions Calgary

Dave Sclanders
Executive Director
dsclanders@meetingscalgary.com

Explore Edmonton

Anna Look
Director, Meetings & Conventions
alook@exploreedmonton.com

Tourism Toronto

Tara Gordon
Vice President, Business Events Sales & Service
tgordon@torcvb.com

Tourisme Montréal

Guy-Joffroy Lord
Director Business Events
glord@mtl.org

Business Events Victoria

Miranda Ji
Vice President, Sales, Victoria Conference Centre
miranda.ji@tourismvictoria.com

Québec City Convention Centre

Caroline Langelier
Director of sales
clangelier@convention.qc.ca

Economic Development Winnipeg

Ryan Kuffner
Vice President of sales & business development
ryan@edwinnipeg.com

Waterloo Region Tourism Marketing Corporation

Minto Schneider
Chief Executive Officer
mschneider@wrtmc.org

Tourism Kelowna

Jennifer Horsnell
Director of Business & Destination Development
jennifer@tourismkelowna.com

Tourism Saskatoon

Brad Peters
Director of international sales
bpeters@tourismsaskatoon.com

Tourism Yukon

Alida Munro
Managing Director
alida@ycb.ca

Invest in Canada

Sarah Albrecht
Director, Partnership Strategy
sarah.albrecht@invcanada.ca

ABOUT SKIFT

Skift is the largest intelligence platform in travel, providing media, insights, marketing to key sectors of the industry. Through daily news, research, podcasts, and Skift Global Forum conferences, Skift deciphers and defines the trends that matter to the marketers, strategists, and technologists shaping the industry.



SkiftX is Skift's in-house content marketing studio, working collaboratively with partners like Adobe, Airbnb, Hyatt, Lyft, Mastercard, and many more on custom projects to engage the world's largest audience of travel influencers and decision makers. Visit skiftx.com to learn more or email skiftx@skift.com

ABOUT DESTINATION CANADA

Destination Canada markets Canada internationally. Our mission is to unite and empower Canada's tourism leaders through compelling research, strategy and storytelling to drive the visitor economy. Destination Canada is a Crown corporation wholly owned by the Government of Canada. We use data-driven marketing strategies to stimulate international demand and tourism export revenue for Canada in 10 countries. Our campaigns are targeted to reflect individual market conditions and traveller interests. In collaboration with our tourism industry partners, we promote Canada internationally as a premier four-season tourism destination. We are a leader in industry knowledge, and provide intelligence, tools, and insights to our partners—equipping them to optimize their business and maximize their reach.



ABOUT BUSINESS EVENTS CANADA

Destination Canada's Business Events Canada team is charged with growing Canada's share of international business events by promoting the country's unique meeting, convention, and incentive event possibilities. Business Events Canada is the first point of contact for planners seeking inspiration, impartial insights, introductions and bid assistance for global events. By driving awareness of Canada's leading economic strengths, we also help decision-makers and meeting planners leverage Canada's intellectual capital to connect with local innovators and thought-leaders across the economic sectors in which Canada excels. Helping facilitate content-related site inspections, B-to-B exchanges and access to subject matter experts, Business Events Canada helps international organizations meet with purpose in Canada.

