

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."

