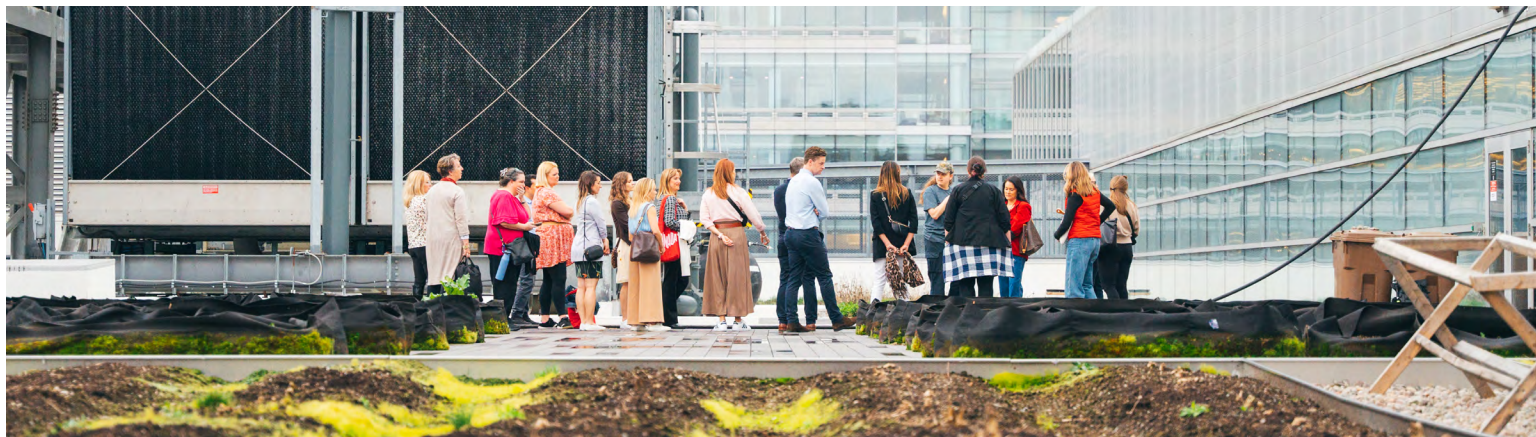


SUSTAINABILITY ROUNDTABLE 2025

**Expert Practitioner Co-Creation Workshop,
Montréal, Québec**

CANADA 



Overview

Destination Canada is at the forefront of advancing sustainability in the business events sector, championing a holistic approach that integrates economic, sociocultural and environmental practices across the country. Through its groundbreaking Canadian Business Events Sustainability Plan—the first national initiative of its kind—Destination Canada empowers partners, suppliers, planners and host communities with actionable tools, coaching and resources, to drive meaningful change and progress toward the business events industry’s sustainability goals. Recent initiatives, such as the Sustainability Storybook¹ and carbon-neutral signature events², exemplify Canada’s commitment to regenerative tourism and lasting positive impact.

As an important next step on this journey, Destination Canada’s Business Events team convened its inaugural **Business Events Sustainability Roundtable** in Montréal, Québec, on April 29 and 30, 2025. It was a pivotal step in advancing the Canadian Business Events Sustainability Plan and supporting the global drive for the business events industry toward net zero emissions by 2050. This gathering brought together 11 leading sustainability experts from influential global business events organizations, representing a diverse cross-section of the global business events and tourism sector.

Four major collaborative actions emerged in co-creation from the roundtable focusing on the following themes: industry alignment, a global knowledge hub, the positive return on investment (ROI) of sustainability, and standardized toolkits.

Purpose and approach

The roundtable, hosted by Virginie De Visscher (Destination Canada) and moderated by [Guy Bigwood](#) (Global Destination Sustainability Movement), fostered meaningful dialogue, shared experiences and produced actionable strategies with an eye towards future trends across the business events industry. This report captures these discussions not only to serve as a marker in time, but also to ensure momentum continues in implementing the agreed strategies, resulting in tangible progress.

The workshop was structured around the [Theory U methodology](#), which guided participants through a process of identifying industry trends, systemic challenges and opportunities for transformative change.



¹ [Destination Canada's Sustainability Storybook](#)

² [Innovate Canada Sustainability Report](#)

Key themes and insights

It was acknowledged that economically, the business events industry is a powerhouse, generating a total global impact of US\$2.8 trillion in business sales, supporting 27.5 million jobs, and contributing US\$1.6 trillion to global gross domestic product (GDP), making it one of the largest industries worldwide.³ This influence extends beyond direct economic benefits, catalyzing innovation, knowledge sharing and industry growth on a global scale. Sustainability is now central to the industry's evolution and its resiliency for the future. Therefore, participants explored the multifaceted barriers to sustainability in business events, including:

- The need to redefine event success to encompass sustainability metrics, not just growth or financial performance.
- Challenges around client engagement, complicated reporting and the perceived lack of immediate benefits from sustainable practices.
- Lack of urgency around incorporating sustainable initiatives before and during business events. Too often, best practices are identified in hindsight—after the event—rather than early in the planning process, when it's most critical to define the desired and required sustainability efforts.
- The perception that sustainability in business events costs more and reduces ROI.
- The erosion of trust due to greenwashing and greenhushing⁴, which stifles innovation and transparency.
- The importance of bridging cultural and generational gaps in sustainability knowledge and values.

Actionable solutions

Four major collaborative initiatives emerged from the roundtable:

1. **Industry Alignment:** Ensure the recently announced alignment between the Events Industry Council (EIC) and Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMJC) creates a unified vision, joint task forces and transparent leadership focused on sustainability globally.
2. **Global Knowledge Hub:** Develop a free, open-access digital forum for the meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) industry to share resources, case studies and best practices, ensuring inclusivity and broad engagement.
3. **ROI of Sustainability:** Elevate and communicate the positive financial and reputational impacts of sustainability initiatives, supported by a database of case studies and storytelling to shift perceptions around cost and value.
4. **Standardized Toolkits:** Create Sustainable Event Goals (SEGs), standardized toolkits and training for universal adoption, enabling clear key performance indicators (KPIs), benchmarking and continuous improvement across the industry.⁵



³ Source: <https://www.iaee.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/EIC-ESS-Executive-Summary.pdf>

⁴ Deliberately under-reporting or withholding information about environmental efforts to avoid scrutiny.

⁵ Examples include [the Sustainability Consortium](#) and the [Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil](#).

Immersive learning and best practices

Destination Canada’s team selects specific United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) to monitor at each business event through a collaborative and evidence-based process. The approach begins with a comprehensive assessment of the host city’s existing sustainability initiatives, using tools like the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index) to benchmark performance across environmental, social and governance indicators, including SDG alignment. Below are the SDGs chosen for the Sustainability Roundtable in Montréal:

Event Sustainability Goals

1 Enable inclusive learning and collaboration through facilitated dialogue and experiential learning sessions led by global sustainability leaders.

2 Minimize environmental impact by reducing waste emissions, and unnecessary consumption.

3 Promote transparency and accountability through vendor engagement, emissions tracking, and public post-event sustainability reporting.

4 Recognize Montreal’s role as the host city by integrating its sustainability practices, venues, and local expertise into the event experience.

SDGs Impacted at the Roundtable



- Offer brain- and gut-healthy meal options with vegetarian focus
- Include wellness breaks such as walk ‘n talks or spa circuit access
- Encourage exploration of Montréal’s cultural and sustainability assets



- Design interactive workshops focused on local and international sustainability practices
- Share knowledge resources post-event to extend impact and legacy



- Prioritize local vendors who demonstrate sustainable operations and request additional measures (e.g., use imperfect fruits/vegetables)
- Highlight innovative local technologies and entrepreneurs (e.g., MT Lab startups)



- Request plated or family-style meals and avoid pre-filled glasses
- Eliminate single-use plastics and use linens only where needed



- Walk and take public transit where possible
- Track and offset emissions

Examples of sustainability in action during the roundtable include:



→ Hosting at Humaniti Hotel Montreal, renowned for its sustainable hospitality. (UN SDG #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth).

← Daily guided walking tours, plus a spa experience and bike tour with local companies. (UN SDGs #3: Good Health and Wellbeing and #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth).



→ An extensive tour of Palais des Congrès de Montréal, a leading business events venue and leader in sustainable event management. (UN SDGs #3: Good Health and Wellbeing, #4: Quality Education and #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth).

← Hands-on workshops such as upcycling vinyl banners from old trade shows, learning about the impacts of neurodiversity among teams and an immersive exhibition in biodiversity, all reinforcing the social and cultural pillars of sustainability. (UN SDGs #4: Quality Education and #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth).



→ Curated local experiences and sustainable dining, highlighting Montréal's commitment to environmental and community stewardship. (UN SDGs #12: Responsible Consumption and Production and #13: Climate Action).

A separate post-event sustainability report will be provided in the coming weeks.



Thank you for hosting us all last week in Montréal at Destination Canada's Sustainability Roundtable. Everything was planned with meticulous detail and you all helped foster deep, meaningful conversations and connections which feel like true movement and progress in our industry.

–Allison Stewart, Motivation Excellence

Next steps: Participants expressed strong interest in continued engagement through future in-person events, working groups and digital platforms. Inclusion of additional participants from across the business events supply chain was encouraged. Suggestions for future iterations emphasized action-oriented objectives, broader stakeholder inclusion, and more opportunities for collaboration and follow-up. Industry events like PCMA's Convene 4 Climate were identified as potential locations to connect again.

Participants also identified strategic working groups, with meetings planned during the summer, in September and in early December.

Destination Canada will continue to provide leadership, transparency and regular updates to the global business events community as it advances its sustainability agenda.

**A SMALL IDEA,
DONE WELL,
CAN CHANGE
EVERYTHING**





Participants

(US) Allison Stewart, Motivation Excellence, an expert in project management, focuses on integrating sustainability into every feasible aspect of event planning and execution.

(Israel) Elena Fis, Kenes Group, has been instrumental in positioning Kenes as a global sustainability leader in event and association management. Her vision emphasizes transparency and collaboration to achieve the SDGs.

(Spain) Elizabeth Truffa, Achieve Incentives & Meetings, is a corporate social responsibility professional with a master's degree in International Tourism Management and a certification by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). Elizabeth leads sustainability initiatives across global client events, leveraging a corporate social responsibility background to strengthen community-led tourism, protecting cultural heritage and boosting positive local economic benefit.

(Spain) Eloisa Urrutia Monnot, American Express Global Business Travel, implements transformative measures to help organizations transition to sustainable business models, emphasizing the integration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles into travel and events programs.

(UK) Lucinda Kingsnorth, Yellow Fish, ensures the implementation of sustainable strategies, always seeking innovative solutions that balance creativity with environmental responsibility across the agency's event management projects.

(US) Mackenzie Dierks, ITA Group, leverages a background in sustainable food production to develop programs that promote socially and environmentally responsible practices from both a corporate and client perspective.

(US) MaryBeth Reeves, McVeigh Global Meetings and Events, with her dual certifications as a Sustainable Event Professional and Inclusive Event Strategist, brings expertise in creating powerful, environmentally conscious events.

(Canada) Natasha Arsenijevich, DoGood Consulting, is an award-winning sustainability leader and business strategist, with experience and expertise in corporate sustainability, business and strategic planning, communications and marketing, green buildings and construction practices, agriculture and food studies, and women's studies.

(US) Rachael Riggs, Maritz, leads the company's ambitious initiative to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, ensuring alignment with the Science Based Targets initiative, and oversees reporting to Ecovadis and the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) for the entire enterprise.

(UK) Richard West, Freemans Event Partners, is driving sustainability initiatives that align environmental responsibility with business performance.

(US) Robert Bartolucci, The Opus Group, leads the company's first enterprise-wide sustainability program, embedding ESG strategy across a global network of event and experience agencies.



Workshop design and flow

Aligned with the expertise of the participants, the workshop's goals were ambitious:

- Share experiences and challenges
- Learn from each other and the future
- Adapt and co-create new solutions
- Foster an engaging, collaborative environment that encourages ongoing engagement to actioning solutions

Theory U, a change and leadership methodology widely used to facilitate transformative change in individuals and groups, particularly in complex or uncertain environments, guided the workshop discussions.

WORKSHOP FLOW: HOW WE WILL WORK TOGETHER?

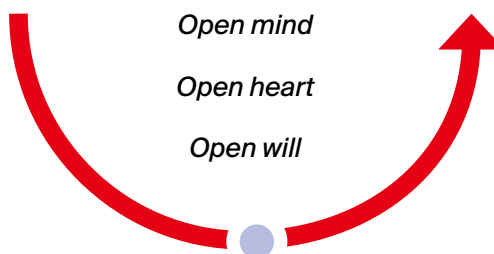
1. What is going on?

Downloading trends, assumptions, patterns

2. Listen and learning

Sharing experiences of success and frustration

Sensing and empathizing with the systemic challenges



3. Sensing the deeper story

Connecting to the future, and presencing what needs to emerge and the possibilities

5. Crystallise (day 2)

Develop a wicked idea

Decide how we will collaborate, and what we do next as a group and individuals

4. Ideas for change

Explore the future, generating new ideas and approaches to tackle challenges and opportunities

Credit: Guy Bigwood

While focusing on the three pillars of sustainability (environment, sociocultural and economic), industry trends, opportunities, challenges, patterns and behaviours were identified. This led the participants to define deeper systemic issues facing the business events industry. As they opened up about the personal impact of these shared challenges and behaviours, participants were inspired to generate and crystallize more creative ideas for change, while building strong professional bonds.

Sensing the deeper story



An event can still be deemed successful yet not be sustainable. We need to redefine success in business events to include sustainability measures across all areas.

–Eloisa Urrutia Monnot, American Express Global Business Travel

As participants reflected on the deeper meaning and purpose beneath shared challenges, time was spent identifying unspoken dynamics and underlying issues, as well as patterns of thinking or behaviour that are contributing to the perceived inertia around sustainability which many of them were struggling against.

Is the lack of commitment or follow through on sustainability initiatives by clients due to unclear measures, complicated reporting and intangible immediate benefits?

Does the business events industry need a new definition of success beyond the typical growth measures? As geopolitical tensions and rising inflation push climate action and the sustainable development goals (UN SDGs) down the priority list, are budgets taking precedence over experiences and outcomes? Can we reduce the cultural and generational value gaps by ensuring a more comprehensive and consistent transfer of knowledge? How can we make infusing sustainability across all pillars—environmental, sociocultural and economic—is non-negotiable?

With greenwashing becoming more prevalent, trust in traditional reporting and metrics for sustainable business events is eroding. Fear was also identified as a significant barrier, with greenhushing—the reluctance to promote or celebrate sustainability advances—fueling client resistance to innovation in sustainability, resulting in only basic sustainability measures being implemented.



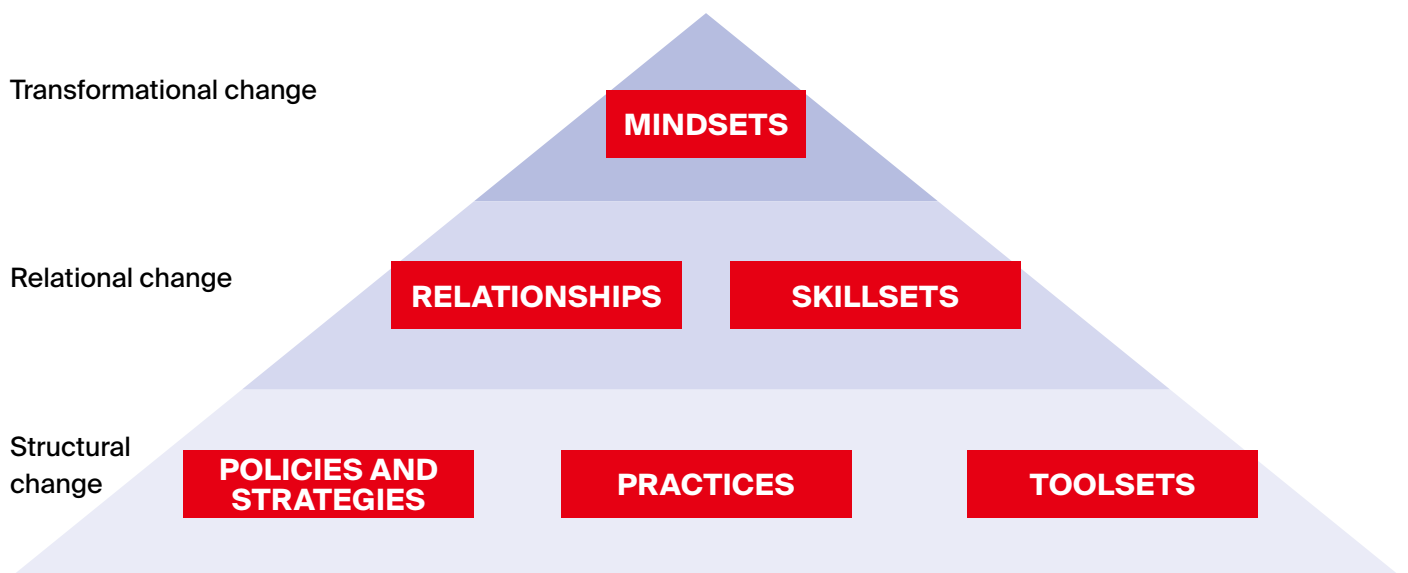


Patience is hard. When you are in the middle of it, you never seem to be moving fast enough, yet we don't pause and celebrate and share our successes.

–Mackenzie Dierks, ITA Group



CONDITIONS OF SYSTEMS CHANGE



Adapted from the Water Systems of Change, by FSG

Crystallizing actionable solutions

Breaking into small groups, participants emerged with the following solutions to the challenges, opportunities and barriers impeding the global business events industry's sustainability goals. These four ideas are the initial strategies which will be worked on over the coming months, to drive the solution-focused results that are motivating the members of the inaugural roundtable. As these ideas evolve, Destination Canada will provide updates that can be shared across the wider industry.

Idea 1⁶

Create a unifying industry coalition that leverages the networks, leadership and influence of organizations like the EIC, JMIC and others to foster systemic alignment and collaboration on sustainability goals across the full spectrum of the business events ecosystem.

The intended impact here is to strengthen cohesion and avoid fragmentation across the business events industry by aligning diverse sustainability efforts. This would transform the industry's approach to sustainability from siloed initiatives into a coordinated force for change, amplifying collective influence, accelerating innovation and driving measurable outcomes aligned with global sustainability goals (e.g., Net Zero by 2050).

Objectives:

- Establish a shared vision and roadmap for sustainability, co-created by a broad cross-section of industry leaders and practitioners.
- Move beyond bilateral collaboration to nurture a collective of aligned partners—including EIC, JMIC, the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE), PCMA, Meetings Professionals International (MPI) and others—united by common goals.
- Create mechanisms for ongoing collaboration, including working groups, discussion forums and innovation labs focused on joint initiatives.
- Champion transparency, trust and shared accountability through consistent communication, co-governance structures and inclusive decision making.

- Foster a culture of mutual support by creating space for learning, experimentation and constructive conflict resolution.
- Avoid duplication of efforts and seek synergies.

Beneficiaries:

- Clients and planners seeking consistent sustainability guidance.
- Industry associations and their members.
- Suppliers and vendors navigating evolving sustainability demands.
- Destination organizations advancing local initiatives.
- The planet and local communities.
- Emerging voices and next-generation leaders with fresh perspectives.

⁶ Idea 1 Taskforce members: Rachael Riggs, Virginie De Visscher, Guy Bigwood and Richard West.

Key activities:

- Convene an initial “Alliance Assembly” with diverse representatives from associations, destination marketing organizations (DMOs), suppliers and clients to define shared priorities and principles.
- Identify and activate cross-association champions to lead thematic task forces (e.g., reporting standards, sustainable sourcing, cultural inclusion).
- Launch pilot collaborations or shared commitments to demonstrate early wins and generate momentum (e.g., a unified sustainability pledge or co-branded initiative).
- Create a neutral, facilitated space for regular dialogue—digital and in-person—to share knowledge and address barriers to alignment.

Key partners and collaborators:

- EIC, JMIC.
- Industry associations: PCMA, MPI, SITE, ASAE, International Association of Professional Congress Organizers (IAPCO), International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), Global Association of the Exhibition Industry (UFI), and others.
- Corporate sustainability leaders and legacy initiatives.
- Local and national tourism organizations and DMOs.
- Facilitators such as the GDS-Movement and sustainability think tanks.

Business and financial model:

- Explore multi-source funding through membership contributions, cross-association pooled resources, research grants, destination support and aligned sponsor partners.
- Consider an adaptive co-leadership governance structure with rotating stewardship to ensure shared ownership and continuity.

Idea 2⁷

Create a free, global, open-access knowledge forum (HUB) dedicated to advancing sustainability in the MICE industry. This digital platform will host shared resources, contacts, real-world case studies and practical guidelines, with the aim of inspiring innovation and driving collective progress.

Objectives:

- Maximize accessibility and global reach of sustainability resources by removing barriers to entry and ensuring open participation and access.
- Encourage peer-to-peer learning about sustainability through collaboration, open dialogue and the sharing of lived experiences and data.
- Champion equity, inclusion and continuous engagement from all sectors and communities across the MICE ecosystem.
- Design a welcoming, transparent and inclusive space that builds trust and psychological safety for all users.

Beneficiaries:

- Stakeholders across the MICE industry.
- Destination Marketing/Management Organizations (DMOs).
- Suppliers and buyers seeking sustainable partnerships.
- Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) working to build capacity and visibility.
- Local communities impacted by MICE activities.
- Associations and their members.

Key activities:

- Build and launch a scalable digital platform focused on sustainability with a robust, transparent governance model.
- Establish community moderation standards and guidelines to ensure quality contributions and user safety.

⁷ Idea 2 Taskforce members: Natasha Arsenijevich (lead), with Elena Fis, Mackenzie Dierks and Allison Stewart

- Include functionality for a multilingual interface for both content submission and access.
- Engage MICE industry leadership and changemakers to champion and contribute to the platform.
- Design an inclusive marketing and public relations strategy to promote awareness and growth.
- Define and monitor KPIs to assess impact and inform evolution.

Key partners and collaborators:

- DMOs and industry leaders willing to co-create and advocate.
- Diverse stakeholder groups, to provide feedback through surveys and interviews.
- Platforms such as the [SHE](#), which the sustainability hub could align with or integrate.

Business and financial model:

- A Reddit-style framework customized for sustainable and regenerative events.
- Structured moderation to maintain constructive, evidence-based discussion.
- Funding through crowdsourcing, grants and advertising to sustain and grow the platform.

Idea 3⁸

Highlight and elevate the positive, revenue-generating aspects of sustainability initiatives in the industry—rewriting the sustainability story, from cost centre to competitive advantage.

Objectives:

- Elevate the ROI of sustainability initiatives—not just as a moral imperative, but as a measurable driver of business growth, innovation and resilience.
- Change perceptions about the cost of sustainability.
- Address fear of and skepticism to change.

- Provide measurable outcomes (e.g., money saved, revenue generated, long-term brand value gained).
- Build a database of case studies to fuel momentum and inspire action.
- Redefine what success looks like in business events, aligning performance metrics with sustainability outcomes.

Key activities:

- Engage major industry associations targeting business events.
- Collect and share case studies that demonstrate real-world impact.
- Launch storytelling and outreach campaigns engaging industry leaders for business events.
- Equip planners, venues and destinations with tools to “sell” sustainability across the supply chain.

Beneficiaries:

- Meeting Planners
- Clients
- Venues
- Sponsors
- Host communities

Key partners and collaborators:

- Major industry associations (IMEX, SITE, MPI, etc.).
- Sustainability “superheroes” and data partners.
- Publications focused on the business events industry, such as The Iceberg.

Business and financial model:

- Funding from companies with net zero targets, sponsorship opportunities and grants.
- Support from industry-aligned partners willing to champion and invest in the work.
- Support from database champions and grants.

⁸ Idea 3 Taskforce members: MaryBeth Reeves and Elizabeth Truffa

Idea 4⁹

Develop Sustainable Event Goals (SEGs) and standardized, actionable sustainability toolkits for events, validated by industry stakeholders.

Objectives:

- Achieve universal adoption of sustainability metrics in events.
- Establish clear KPIs and create a global, accessible community database.
- Set year-over-year benchmarks and improve sustainability metrics annually.

Beneficiaries:

- DMOs
- Local communities
- Businesses, including event organizers, corporations and the supply chain

Key Activities:

- Convene working groups and governance bodies.
- Build broad-based power and influence.
- Develop and pilot the toolkit.

Key Partners and Collaborators:

- DMOs
- Travel management companies (TMCs)
- Hotel chains
- Technology providers
- Associations
- Local communities
- Corporations

Business and Financial Model:

- Funded by sponsors, destinations, corporations and public incentives.



**When you go alone, you go fast.
When you go together, you go far.**

–Unknown



⁹ Idea 4 Taskforce members: Lead- Elena Fis, Mackenzie Dierks, Robert Bartolucci, Eloisa Urrutia Monnot, and Allison Stewart.

Survey results

Destination Canada's inaugural Sustainability Roundtable received overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants, with all 11 respondents rating the overall quality as "Very Good." Attendees highlighted the program's inclusive design, inspirational activities and the value of networking and collaboration.

Recommendations for future gatherings included:

- Add governance as a workshop topic.
- Include hands-on activities related to waste separation.
- Dive deeper into ideas generated at the inaugural roundtable and ensure actionable outcomes.
- Broaden the scope to include more stakeholders from across the event supply chain and learn from more diverse perspectives.

Key recommendations for improvement are:

- Enhance positive social impact through local volunteering.
- Lengthen reflection and workshop sessions.
- Formalize ongoing collaboration after the event.
- Engage a wider range of stakeholders.
- Offer more plant-based meal options to further reduce the event's carbon footprint.

Conclusion

The roundtable affirmed the collective resolve and expertise within the industry to drive meaningful change towards greater sustainability. By fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing and innovation, Destination Canada and its partners are setting a new standard for the global events sector—balancing sociocultural, economic and environmental impact for a resilient future.

Thank you to Tourisme Montréal and their Senior Sustainability Consultant Fanny Beaulieu-Cormier, along with Destination Canada's Jennifer Attersall and Rebecca Anderson. A special thank you to Guy Bigwood, who led us with grace, humour and remarkable insight. Without your support this event would not have been possible.

Virginie De Visscher, Executive Director, Business Events, Destination Canada.



Additional Notes and Content:

Words used by participants to describe how they felt following our time together included:

- Fulfilled
- Motivated
- Empowered
- Less lonely
- Revitalized
- Connected
- Reassured
- Positive
- Inspired
- Buzzing
- Seen
- Enriched
- Blessed
- Welcomed
- Grateful

Survey comments:

“It was an amazing event, well organized and perfectly facilitated.”

“Destination Canada is the best and has the ability to bring the industry together and drive this sustainability bus. No one has asked the event professionals what they want and need like Canada has done. Canada has really listened. Let’s do it.”

“I feel honored to have been able to participate and had a wonderful time. I have spent the past week telling everyone about how impactful it was and am working to capture and report out internally about it as a learning tool for our teams. The best part is that it’s a great example of how approachable a sustainable event can be. The event was short, sweet, succinct and effective.”

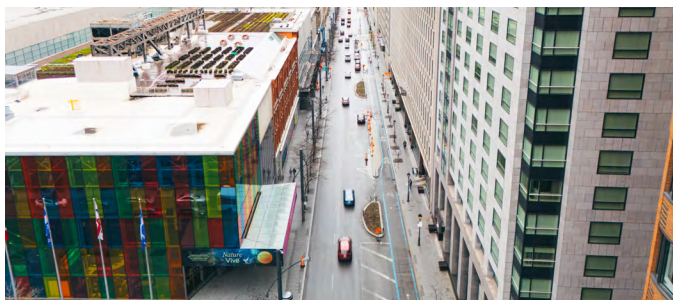


Summary of immersive experiences:

Destination Canada's inaugural Sustainability Roundtable for business events was created around immersive experiences aligned with select UN SDGs. The two-day event featured workshops, guided tours and hands-on activities focused on environmental stewardship, social inclusion and economic impact, enabling participants to engage meaningfully while being inspired by Montréal's sense of place. Participants brought their own water bottles, did not receive name tags, and walked or used public transportation when needed.



Humaniti Hotel Montreal was chosen for its blend of luxury with sustainability, featuring eco-friendly toiletries, LED lighting, recycled materials, water-saving technologies, electric car charging, and LEED certification, ensuring an environmentally-conscious guest experience. (UN SDG #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth)



The program included an extensive tour of the **Palais des congrès de Montréal**, a leading business events venue for sustainability, with a carbon-neutral building, green roof and urban agriculture, innovative carbon offset programs, energy-efficient systems, comprehensive waste management and recycling systems, and incentives for eco-friendly events. Its initiatives align with the UN's 2030 Agenda, promoting environmental responsibility and community engagement. Participants also took part in a vinyl

upcycling workshop on site, transforming old event banners into luggage tags.

(UN SDGs #4: Quality Education and #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth)



The Root for Nature at the Palais des Congrès de Montréal was an 80-minute immersive exhibition celebrating biodiversity through stunning digital projections, interactive educational zones and sensory experiences. An example of a powerful legacy from a business event, this exhibition was inspired by the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15), held in Montréal in 2022. The exhibition invites visitors of all ages to reconnect with nature and commit to conservation and a sustainable future.

(UN SDGs #3: Good Health and Wellbeing and #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth)



The Neurodiverse Lasagna Lab was an interactive workshop, offered by **Nüense**, in which participants collaboratively made lasagna, using its layers as a metaphor for neurodiversity. By shaping colourful pasta to represent diverse ways of thinking, the lab fosters inclusion, challenges workplace stereotypes and encourages authentic dialogue about neurodiversity through creative, hands-on engagement.

(UN SDGs #4: Quality Education, #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, and #10: Reduced Inequalities)



Optional ‘recharging’ activities included daily “rise and shine” guided walking tours with local tour provider, [Spade & Palacio](#), and an afternoon of ‘free time’ which included options like an electric bike tour, or rest and relaxation at the [Bota Bota spa-sur-l’eau](#) in the Old Port of Montréal.

UN SDGs #3: Good Health and Wellbeing and #13: Climate Action)



Restaurants were chosen for their commitment to sustainable food practices, use of local ingredients and showcasing cultural and traditional recipes from the region. A highlight was [Candide](#). Tucked away in a converted rectory, the restaurant champions sustainability with zero single-use plastics, composting and a seasonal menu crafted from local, pesticide-free ingredients. The menu is entirely composed of ingredients sourced from Québec, including foraged items, and features vegetable-forward dishes with occasional options for fish, seafood or game meats.

(UN SDG #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth and #12: Responsible Consumption and Production).

The Way Only You Can Walk

by Guy Bigwood

Do not wait for the trail to appear,
it will not.

You make it by the weight of your own footfall,
by the leaning of your own long hope into the mist.

The questions you carry
are not mistakes.

They are the lanterns swinging in your hands,
showing you a road no one else can see.

Walk on.

Even the stones will lift themselves
to meet your feet.

Even the silence will find a voice,
when you listen hard enough to your own.