



CANADA^{*}

Canada's

SUSTAINABILITY

Storybook



FOREWORD

Destination Canada’s 2030 strategy—**A World of Opportunity**—aims to transform our industry, by taking a regenerative approach to tourism, creating sustainable, meaningful experiences for travellers and tangible environmental, sociocultural and economic benefits for all.

In Business Events, our **Sustainability Plan** continues to elevate the sustainability of events hosted across the country, pushing forward innovative sustainability solutions for decision makers to build a regenerative tourism industry that works for people, planet and place.

This Sustainability Storybook shares many of these sustainability initiatives from communities across Canada, presenting turnkey solutions to inspire and challenge business events decision makers, planners, sustainability professionals and host destinations everywhere.

Each sustainability solution in this book is aligned with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)**, an internationally-recognized shared framework for achieving a better and more sustainable future—and a common language that unites us all.

Finally, I’d like to thank all the Team Canada partners who are acting as stewards of sustainability in the business events industry, pushing the sustainability movement forward and contributing unique, imaginative and practical solutions to this storybook.

Happy reading!



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INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is no longer a nice-to-have—especially within the meetings and events industry. Although it’s long been on our collective radar, more drastic action needs to be taken if the industry is going to succeed at meeting net-zero targets. Progress will require a coordinated effort among all of us.

Business events delegates are also more motivated than ever to see sustainability incorporated into the events they attend, as they seek to make a positive impact themselves within values-driven organizations.

Destination Canada and our Team Canada partners are committed to ensuring meetings hosted in Canada—and around the world—leave a positive handprint, rather than a negative footprint. We want to lessen the environmental footprint of events while boosting their sociocultural and economic benefits.

That’s why, in 2022, Destination Canada set out to elevate the sustainability of events hosted across the country by launching our **[Business Events Sustainability Plan](#)**. This national program aims to enhance the economic, sociocultural and environmental sustainability practices of business events hosted in Canada. The ultimate goal of the Canadian Business Events Sustainability Plan is to help global clients develop business events with sustainability at their core—specifically for international association conferences, trade exhibitions, workshops and seminars, as well as corporate meetings and incentive group events.

To do this, cities across Canada are participating in the annual benchmarking process of the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index), a trusted performance improvement program to assess and accelerate the progress of a destination’s regenerative journey. It measures, benchmarks and enhances the sustainability strategies, action plans and initiatives of more than 100 destination management organizations, municipal authorities and their tourism supply chains.

Contributing to the country’s leadership in this area, Canadian destinations from coast to coast to coast are implementing innovative and comprehensive approaches to sustainability.

In this storybook, you will find a myriad of examples of the imaginative yet practical sustainability initiatives available to global business events clients in Canadian destinations. It provides event planners and organizations with practical insights and tangible tools for sustainable event planning—so you can meet your delegates’ expectations of sustainability, hit your environmental, sociocultural and economic targets, and keep your corporate social responsibility commitments.

Ultimately, we hope this storybook provides the actionable solutions business events organizers need to work towards the UN SDGs together, to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.



A Quick Guide to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)

Canada is setting a global standard in sustainable business events by aligning its practices with the UN SDGs. The UN SDGs are a call for action by all countries—poor, rich and middle-income—to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand in hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- 1

NO POVERTY

End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- 2

ZERO HUNGER

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
- 3

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- 4

QUALITY EDUCATION

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- 5

GENDER EQUALITY

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- 6

CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- 7

AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- 8

DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

- 9

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- 10

REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- 11

SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- 12

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- 13

CLIMATE ACTION

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- 14

LIFE BELOW WATER

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, sea and marine resources for sustainable development.
- 15

LIFE ON LAND

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.
- 16

PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- 17

PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

How To Use This Storybook?

This storybook is designed for ease of use so that you can refer to it again and again.

Initiatives are arranged into different sections according to the three pillars of sustainability—environmental, sociocultural and economic.

On each initiative page, you will find a brief description of the initiative, what it can do for your business event, logos identifying which UN SDGs the initiative supports, and a link to read more about it.

At the back of the storybook, you will find two indexes—one by destination and one by UN SDG, so that you can find initiatives that meet your needs quickly.

We hope you will be inspired by these initiatives and will refer to these ideas in future to enhance your business events, in Canada and beyond.



ENVIRONMENTAL Stories

Take a journey through Canadian destinations' proactive approaches to environmental stewardship through business events.

Topics include:

- **Waste Reduction:** Innovative practices for reducing waste at events, such as compostable materials and recycling programs.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Initiatives to minimize energy consumption, including the use of renewable energy sources and energy-efficient technologies.
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Efforts to protect local ecosystems and promote biodiversity during events.



SOLAR-POWERED MEETINGS

Calgary, Alberta



UNITED NATIONS
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Calgary receives more sunshine hours annually than any other major Canadian city and this presents an incredible opportunity to transform this sunshine into a useable source of power.

The Calgary TELUS Convention Centre (CTCC) has a 10 kilowatt solar array on the roof of its North Building that generates power for the meetings and conventions within the facility. This innovative solar installation generates approximately 14,000 kilowatt hours of power

annually, which offsets the CTCC's emissions by about 11 tonnes each year. The CTCC has been committed to environmental stewardship and a leader in sustainability for more than 25 years.

CTCC's solar installation is part of an integrated approach to responsibly managing resources for events, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by implementing efficiency and mitigation solutions for energy. By reducing its carbon footprint and offsetting emissions, the CTCC can help you reduce your event's environmental impact.



GET RESULTS

Choosing the CTCC as a business events venue demonstrates a commitment to environmental stewardship that aligns with your sustainability goals. The innovative environmental initiatives at the CTCC give you an opportunity to showcase your environmentally responsible practices and reduce the carbon footprint of your event.

NEED TO KNOW



Choose a venue powered by renewable energy to reduce your event's carbon footprint.





ROAD TO ZERO WASTE

Edmonton, Alberta



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The zero-waste program in place at the Edmonton EXPO Centre and Edmonton Convention Centre aims to divert 90% of waste from landfill. The unique program offers customizable bins, guidelines for attendees and exhibitors, and staff support for proper recycling and sorting. This program is part of a broader zero-waste initiative that also promotes reusable items, encourages bringing water bottles, installs hand dryers and uses compostable single-use items.

The events industry generates significant waste, but these zero-waste programs help create sustainable processes and innovative environmental solutions, advancing Edmonton's sustainability. In 2023, the program diverted 583,667 kg of waste from landfill through donation, reuse, recycling and composting, reducing the environmental footprint and promoting a cleaner, healthier community. The Edmonton EXPO Centre and the Edmonton Convention Centre's zero-waste programs help you address the increasing demand for sustainable practices and waste reduction at business events.

“Zero waste is more about the journey than the destination.”



GET RESULTS

Through this zero-waste program, planners can reduce the amount of waste associated with their events and engage their attendees in the process. Sustainability staff will assist you in planning a customized waste reduction strategy for your event, making the process simple and efficient.

NEED TO KNOW



Participate in a zero-waste program to achieve a cleaner, more sustainable community.

[Learn more](#)





SUSTAINABLE INCENTIVE FUNDING

Halifax, Nova Scotia



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This incentive framework developed by Discover Halifax aims to support event planners looking to implement sustainable initiatives as part of their event. The framework covers options such as zero waste, sustainable catering, energy efficiency and social equity initiatives. To support the implementation of these activities, incentives are offered in the form of monetary discounts, recognition-based rewards, value-added benefits, partnerships with local sustainable businesses and community engagement project sponsorship.

This sustainable incentive funding framework addresses the growing demand for environmental solutions and offers planners useful tiered incentives and comprehensive support so they can successfully implement sustainable event practices. By implementing sustainable practices, event organizers not only enhance their brand reputation and attract eco-conscious stakeholders, but also potentially reduce operational costs through efficient resource use.



We're thrilled to provide an incentive framework that encourages sustainable event hosting options to clients and delegates from around the world.

- Jeff Nearing, Vice President,
Meetings & Conventions, Discover Halifax

GET RESULTS

The framework provides a structured approach to integrating sustainability into your events, offering incentives like discounts, recognition and support. This helps reduce operational costs and attracts attendees with aligned values, meeting the increasing demand for sustainable and responsible events. The program's comprehensive support and tiered rewards make it simple for planners to prioritize sustainability, guaranteeing that their events are both meaningful and responsible.

NEED TO KNOW



**Adopt sustainable
business event initiatives
and reap the corporate
rewards.**





Directory of SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL Organizations

Montréal, Québec



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The Directory of Social and Environmental Organizations from Tourisme Montréal provides a list of organizations that can partner with planners to give back to the local community. These potential partners support initiatives such as the reuse of event items, sustainable disposal, surplus food reallocation and volunteer opportunities. The directory simplifies the process of finding suppliers and organizations that can help event planners create a positive impact in the community.

Using this directory, planners can connect with Montréal-based organizations that provide vital community services and have a need for volunteers. Through collaboration, planners can support these organizations to deliver the programs and services that help reduce inequalities and foster community engagement within the destination.



Event organizers are keen to generate a positive footprint during their visit, and to leave a legacy afterwards... Sustainable development is at the heart of our tourism development, so this directory is a way for us to keep Montréal at the forefront of industry trends, while generating a positive impact for local citizens and organizations.

- Yves Lalumière, CEO, Tourisme Montréal

GET RESULTS

The Directory of Social and Environmental Organizations provides event organizers with a valuable tool to align their operations with sustainable practices and make a meaningful contribution to the local host community. This directory streamlines the process, so you can partner with organizations to reuse your event items, sustainably dispose of items you no longer need, provide volunteer opportunities to your attendees and donate surplus food.



[Learn more](#)





Guide to Best Practices for SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS EVENTS

Montréal, Québec



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The Guide to Best Practices for Sustainable Business Events is a practical tool developed by Tourisme Montréal, in collaboration with local experts, that offers event planners a comprehensive checklist and actionable steps to integrate sustainability into events. Tailored to the Montréal context, it covers all aspects of event planning with locally-sourced solutions, making it easy to achieve sustainability at every stage. This guide aims to reduce environmental harm and promote positive impacts through smart, sustainable practices.

This invaluable guide helps bridge knowledge gaps, especially for newcomers, by providing simple, actionable steps to implement sustainable event solutions. It addresses the critical need for sustainable practices in event planning by prioritizing positive environmental and social impacts.



“

Business Events Montréal really wants to help planners generate more impact. We are here to facilitate and help planners navigate through our different communities and we're creating tools, such as Best Practices for Sustainable Business Events, to help planners achieve sustainable goals.

- Martine Laberge, Director of sales,
Business Events Montréal

GET RESULTS

The Guide to Best Practices for Sustainable Business Events not only offers advice, but also tangible solutions. By providing tailored, locally-sourced strategies, it empowers you to navigate the complexities of sustainability seamlessly, ensuring your events make a meaningful impact on both the local community and the environment.

NEED TO KNOW



Follow simple steps to
create an event that hits
all your sustainability
goals.

[Learn more](#)





LEAVE A LEGACY

Ottawa, Ontario



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The Shaw Centre’s Leave a Legacy program repurposes excess conference materials by donating them to local community organizations in Ottawa. This program diverts items from landfills, giving a second life to non-perishable food, marketing materials, furniture and other goods. The Shaw Centre team manages the donation process, ensuring materials are distributed to community partners serving those in need, such as shelters, schools and community groups. Thousands of items, including ponchos, hand sanitizers, first aid kits, metal water bottles and notebooks are donated annually.

The program prioritizes a community-driven approach, emphasizing local impact and sustainability. It introduces creative solutions, focuses on measurable outcomes and fosters collaborative partnerships for maximum effectiveness. Its adaptability ensures it remains relevant to evolving needs, making it a model program for creating lasting positive change.

The Leave a Legacy program is a program that everyone here at the Shaw Centre is proud to talk about. It takes items that would generally be destined for the landfill and gives them to community organizations who can use them. Many of our clients are keen on participating in this program as it provides an environmentally and socially responsible way to see their leftover or excess items be used.

- Josh Verch, Director, Marketing and Partnerships, Shaw Centre



GET RESULTS

The Leave a Legacy program provides a solution for repurposing materials that would otherwise be disposed of, showcasing your commitment to corporate responsibility and strengthening stakeholder relationships. By participating, you minimize your event’s environmental impact, aligning with the growing demand for sustainability in the business events sector. This supports your long-term viability and competitiveness in a changing market landscape.



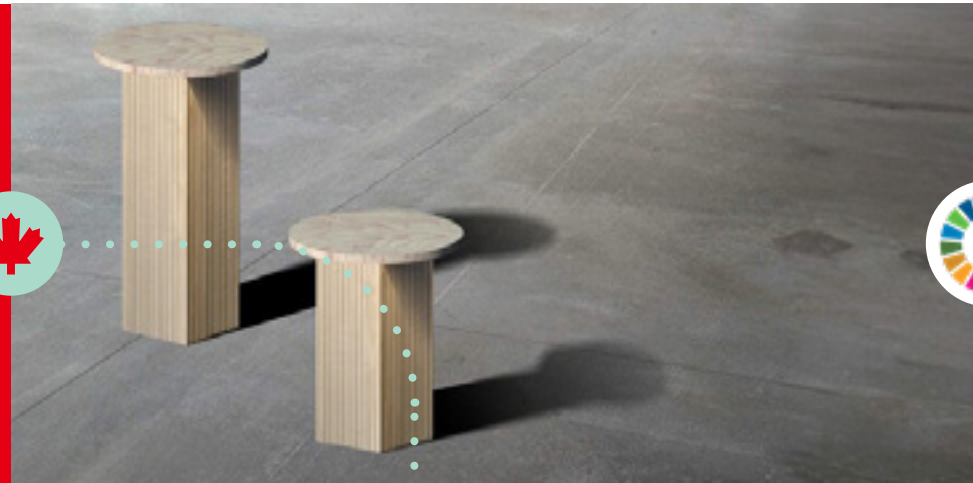
[Learn more](#)





LouLou Lounge's UPCYCLED EVENT FURNITURE

Ottawa, Ontario



UNITED NATIONS
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GOALS



LouLou Lounge Furniture Rentals offers stylish furniture pieces designed to create an impact at your event in Ottawa. The new Felicity line is the first of its kind in Canada, a collection of chic furniture made from upcycled maple recovered primarily from construction scraps. It includes bars, bar back shelves, cruiser tables, communal tables, coffee tables and end tables.

The collaboration between Ottawa Tourism and LouLou Lounge promotes sustainability and reduces waste in event decor and furnishings procurement by upcycling materials and supporting local small and medium enterprises, contributing to Ottawa's circular economy. Additionally, the partnership behind the Felicity collection exemplifies how events can inspire innovative projects, consumer choices and local job creation.



“

The Felicity collection is Canada's first upcycled furniture and decor line which is 100% home-grown in Ottawa. It uses upcycled materials from construction sites and other projects in Ottawa and is designed and built in Canada's capital. LouLou Lounge's upcycled furniture line: old never felt so new — old never made so happy.

- Carole Saad, President, LouLou Lounge

GET RESULTS

The Felicity line offers you an option for event decor and furnishings that can truly claim to be upcycled and reusable. Pieces can be used at events to showcase how waste can become something of worth, allowing attendees to interact with and experience the concept firsthand. This enhances the event experience and reinforces a message of “reduce, reuse, recycle”.

NEED TO KNOW



Transform your event with
stylish sustainability
your attendees
can feel.





Business Events
**SUSTAINABILITY
GUIDE**

Prince Edward Island



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



Meetings & Conventions Prince Edward Island (PEI) provides a Sustainability Guide to all meeting planners during the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The goal of the guide is to initiate early discussions on sustainable event planning and support planners throughout the process. The guide includes nine steps for integrating eco-friendly practices into business travel, covering transportation, dining and waste management.

The Sustainability Guide is an essential tool to help kickstart discussions to make your event more sustainable. Planners can use this to inform sustainable choices that reduce your environmental impact, support the local community, and make a positive and lasting impact on the destination.



Our Sustainability Guide marks an exciting new beginning in our journey to making Prince Edward Island a truly sustainable destination to host business events and conferences. We look forward to continuing to work with both industry partners and meeting planners to ensure we all work together to keep growing our practices towards Prince Edward Island's net zero targets.

- Susan Freeman, Executive Director,
Meetings & Conventions Prince Edward Island

GET RESULTS

The Sustainability Guide provides an accessible, easy-to-use resource with recommendations and simple steps for making your business travel and events more environmentally sustainable. It helps you seamlessly integrate eco-friendly practices into your events, supporting your commitment to environmental responsibility.



[Learn more](#)





EVENT PASS

Québec City, Québec



UNITED NATIONS
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DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



The Event Pass offered by the Réseau de transport de la Capitale (RTC) in Québec City is an affordable unlimited ride pass on the RTC network during events. Event organizers can purchase this pass in bulk quantities to offer to their attendees to promote sustainable and cost-effective transportation.

The Event Pass promotes sustainable transportation choices, reducing carbon emissions and improving accessibility around the destination. This prioritization of environmentally friendly transportation methods fosters sustainable cities and communities. Moreover, it optimizes infrastructure use, supporting economic growth and innovation within the city.



The Event Pass provided by RTC exemplifies our dedication to sustainable business tourism in Québec City. We take pride in the RTC's attention to our clientele's needs, offering event organizers an accessible, environmentally friendly transportation option, ultimately enriching the participant experience.

- Ann Cantin, Director, Communications,
Québec City Business Destination

GET RESULTS

The Event Pass addresses transportation challenges by offering an affordable and environmentally friendly solution to event planners. This tailored solution helps you reduce your event's carbon footprint while providing convenient transportation for participants to explore the destination.

NEED TO KNOW



Give the gift of unlimited public transportation to minimize your event's environmental impact.

[Learn more](#)





ORGANICS COLLECTION AND COMPOSTING

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan



UNITED NATIONS
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TCU Place, Saskatoon's Arts & Convention Centre, has partnered with their waste contractor to implement an organics collection and composting initiative to divert waste from landfill. Their focus on reducing food waste significantly impacts the centre's environmental footprint. The centre has enhanced key purchasing decisions to prioritize more sustainable material, has developed clear waste management communication and regularly conducts waste diversion measurement and reporting.

Since the project's inception, landfill waste volume from TCU Place has markedly decreased, with 47% of waste now being diverted from landfill. A commitment to reducing waste showcases the event planner's dedication to reducing environmental impact while simultaneously increasing the event's positive contributions, setting an example for others in the industry to follow.



“

We acknowledge our responsibility to reduce our demand on the planet's finite resources, minimize our carbon footprint and help meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. We can and will do more to provide better outcomes for our community, our customers and our environment. I'm excited that TCU Place is a proud signatory of the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge and the Tourism Saskatoon Green Stem Pledge—showing the world that we can reduce our footprint while increasing our handprint.

- Tammy Sweeney, CEO, TCU Place

GET RESULTS

TCU Place's organics collection initiative makes it easier to host events with a reduced environmental footprint. This is crucial because food waste constitutes a significant portion of event waste. By choosing a venue that prioritizes waste reduction and composting, you lower your impact and contribute to making your event more environmentally friendly.

NEED TO KNOW



Choose a venue with waste reduction initiatives to cut your event's environmental impact.

[Learn more](#)





GREENSMART PROGRAM

Toronto, Ontario



UNITED NATIONS
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Exhibition Place in Toronto enables event organizers to demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship through its GREENSmart Program, leveraging technology to enhance sustainability. Notable innovations featured in the program include an Urban Wind Turbine generating one million kilowatt hours annually, a Geothermal Plant reducing use of non-renewable energy, an Urban Forestry Program planting 3,042 trees to mitigate pollution and the Green Roof Projects promoting energy conservation. Committed to the Net Zero Carbon Events Pledge and the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge, Exhibition Place demonstrates dedication to sustainability and leadership in business events.

Exhibition Place’s GREENSmart program contributes to overall environmental health and wellbeing of the city by reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainable practices in the business events industry, which traditionally has a large environmental footprint. By empowering events and visitors to prioritize sustainability, Exhibition Place helps showcase the meeting organizer’s commitment to environmental responsibility and sets a positive example for other venues and organizations.



At Exhibition Place, we have long understood the importance of sustainability and our GREENSmart initiatives span almost two decades of progress in this realm. Today, we remain dedicated to reducing our impact on the planet by going beyond conventional industry practices and supporting the efforts of like-minded event organizers.

- Laura Purdy, General Manager, Exhibition Place

GET RESULTS

The GREENSmart program at Exhibition Place assists you in achieving your event’s environmental and corporate responsibility goals, while providing tangible benefits such as cost savings, regulatory compliance and attraction of sustainability-minded attendees.

NEED TO KNOW



Host your event at a venue that uses innovative technology to reduce its environmental impact.

[Learn more](#)





ROOFTOP BEEHIVE

Toronto, Ontario



UNITED NATIONS
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The Metro Toronto Convention Centre's (MTCC) sustainable food and beverage program supports local businesses by providing food options sourced right on the property and from nearby suppliers, minimizing transportation emissions and supporting the local economy, while reducing food waste.

The on-site beehive and rooftop garden at the MTCC contribute to urban biodiversity and provide ingredients for unique culinary creations. The Green Roof, spanning almost three hectares (seven acres), reduces energy consumption and cooling costs, offers a public park space and enhances the cityscape. Additionally, the roof's beehive, housing 50,000 bees, supports these vital pollinators in Toronto and provides delicious local honey for business events menus.

By prioritizing hyper-local food and beverage sourcing and effective waste management, MTCC reduces the environmental footprint of business events, while contributing to the city's broader sustainability goals. This commitment to green practices helps improve the quality of life for residents and creates a more sustainable urban environment.



GET RESULTS

Food plays a significant role in the environmental impact of events. Through the beehive and rooftop garden initiatives, you can serve a hyper-local, environmentally friendly menu at your event and reduce its footprint, while offering a remarkable culinary experience to your attendees. MTCC's commitment to hyper-local food and beverage sourcing, in-house culinary services and waste diversion ensures that as much event waste as possible stays out of landfills helping you achieve your sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility goals.

NEED TO KNOW



Provide an unforgettable hyper-local culinary experience to reduce your environmental footprint.

“

For us, it's all about ensuring that our impact is as minimal as possible, there's as little waste as possible and being flexible about securing locally harvested foods.

- David Procopio, Vice President, Food and Beverage,
Metro Toronto Convention Centre

[Learn more](#)

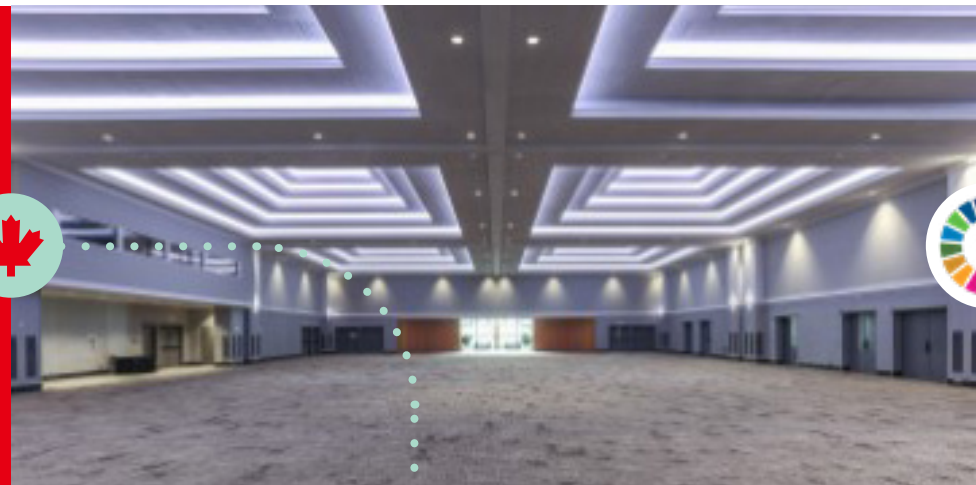


Toronto

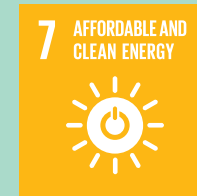


CARBON NEUTRALITY

Victoria, British Columbia

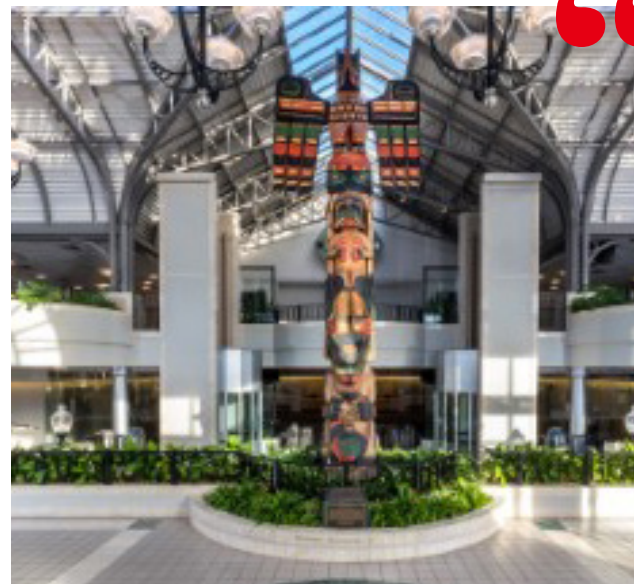


UNITED NATIONS
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DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



The Victoria Conference Centre (VCC) sets a national standard for environmental excellence through its carbon neutrality certification and Biosphere Certification. The VCC has also adopted a comprehensive strategy to reduce emissions, waste and resource use in their overall operations and at business events. Since 2012, the VCC has reduced emissions by 50.8%, decreased electricity consumption by 50%, reduced water usage by 70% and decreased landfilled waste by 47%.

Holding an event at the VCC demonstrates leadership in sustainability through energy efficiency, carbon neutrality waste reduction and reducing the environmental impacts of events. The VCC's commitment to sustainability and environmental practices positively impacts the broader community and the destination's ecological integrity.



“

Over the past two years, numerous aesthetic, safety and sustainability upgrades were made to the VCC to enhance the event experience for conference organizers and delegates. An additional 200 sustainability actions were completed over the past year to earn VCC's Biosphere Certification. As a result, we've significantly enhanced Greater Victoria's reputation as a socially, economically and environmentally conscious destination to visit.

- Kerri Moore, Director, Business and Community Relations, City of Victoria

GET RESULTS

Through their robust environmental initiatives, the VCC enables eco-responsible event planners to meet their environmental objectives. From energy efficiency to water conservation, the VCC will help you reduce your event's environmental footprint and can even help you achieve a carbon neutral event.

NEED TO KNOW



Host your event at a carbon-neutral venue to minimize your environmental impact.

[Learn more](#)





SOCIOCULTURAL Stories

Embrace cultural heritage and nurture social wellbeing through the transformative lens of sustainable event planning.

Topics include:

- **Cultural Celebration:** Efforts that incorporate and celebrate local traditions and Indigenous cultures.
- **Community Engagement:** Plans for involving local communities in event planning and execution, ensuring their needs and perspectives are considered.
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI):** Initiatives to make events accessible and inclusive for all attendees.

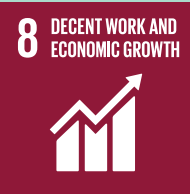


INDIGENOUS FASHION SHOW

Banff and Lake Louise, Alberta



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The Indigenous Fashion Show supported by Banff & Lake Louise Tourism integrates Indigenous voices into event programming by offering a platform for Indigenous communities to share their cultural heritage and creative expressions. This initiative is grounded in collaborations with Indigenous designers, artisans and community leaders, ensuring authenticity. The showcase fosters cultural appreciation, empowerment and community engagement, aiming to amplify Indigenous voices and celebrate their rich cultural traditions.

Indigenous programming fosters partnerships that work towards reducing inequalities by celebrating and empowering all voices. It promotes economic growth by providing opportunities for designers and artisans to showcase and sell their work. This collaborative effort addresses social, economic and cultural dimensions, contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals while highlighting the wealth of Indigenous cultures.



It was an honour to be included in the event held for SITE ISA with Banff & Lake Louise Tourism and Destination Canada. This helps with Truth and Reconciliation by fostering understanding. It was meaningful to showcase my work on a local level.

- Stephanie Crowchild, Founder & Owner,
Stephanie Eagletail Designs

GET RESULTS

Integrating Indigenous experiences into events provides your attendees with a unique and immersive experience opportunity to engage with Indigenous culture and values. This enhances the overall event experience and underscores a genuine commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). By supporting and celebrating Indigenous communities, your event demonstrates a dedication to cultural appreciation and social responsibility.



[Learn more](#)

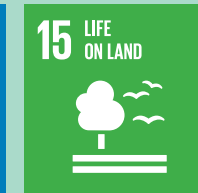
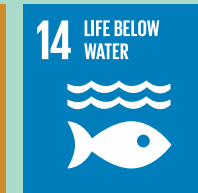


GROWN RIGHT. HERE.

Calgary, Alberta



UNITED NATIONS
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GOALS



The Calgary Stampede's BMO Centre offers an exceptional sustainable culinary experience called the Grown Right. Here. Program. This program offers an environmentally-conscious menu featuring seasonal and locally sourced products. These menus celebrate Canada's local flavours and prioritize sustainability, with fresh produce and world-famous Alberta beef at the forefront. Event planners and guests can enjoy an authentic Western culinary experience that fosters a closer connection to the origins of their food.

Large-scale events like meetings and conventions can consume many local resources, but by prioritizing local and sustainable practices, event organizers can promote biodiversity, reduce pollution emissions, and drive socioeconomic prosperity within the region. This approach nurtures a strong sense of community engagement and stewardship. Sourcing locally and sustainably for business events cultivates positive impacts for all stakeholders involved.



GET RESULTS

The BMO Centre's culinary program streamlines the selection of locally sourced and sustainable food for your event, reducing transportation distances to minimize pollution emissions and distribution waste. Supporting local food businesses and producers promotes socioeconomic prosperity in the region while highlighting the city's cultural heritage and flavours. This also contributes to cultural exchange, enriching attendees' experience in Calgary.

NEED TO KNOW



Offer your guests an authentic local menu to showcase biodiversity and drive prosperity.

[Learn more](#)



METRO HUB

Kelowna, British Columbia



UNITED NATIONS
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Metro Centre, comprised of Metro Hub event space and Metro Community outreach centre, offers an innovative way for meeting planners to foster social sustainability through venue selection. Every event booked at Metro Hub directly supports Metro Community, which enhances the lives of people experiencing homelessness. From helping to reduce poverty to supporting sustainable communities, Metro Hub demonstrates event organizers’ commitment to community engagement—and ensures attendees feel positive about their impact.

Metro Hub demonstrates how business events can positively impact local communities and support sustainable tourism practices. It promotes inclusivity, strengthens social bonds and fosters a sense of belonging among diverse groups. By providing a space for learning, creativity and celebration, Metro Hub dismantles barriers to cultural participation and plays a pivotal role in promoting understanding and tolerance.



The sociocultural impact of Metro Hub is profound. Providing a space where community members can learn, create and celebrate together strengthens social bonds and encourages a sense of belonging among diverse groups. The Hub’s emphasis on inclusion helps dismantle barriers to cultural participation. Metro Hub plays a pivotal role in promoting understanding and tolerance.

- Nicolle Gomez de Sousa, Business Development Sales Manager, Tourism Kelowna

GET RESULTS

Holding a business event at Metro Hub enhances its sustainability by addressing key UN Sustainable Development Goals and aligning with your corporate social responsibility efforts. By leveraging this initiative, planners can prioritize social impact and inclusivity, demonstrating a commitment to reducing poverty, promoting education and gender equality and fostering community development. This positively impacts the community, creating a more meaningful and responsible event experience.

NEED TO KNOW



Partner with a unique venue and make your event a force for good.

[Learn more](#)



FOOD RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP

Ottawa, Ontario



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



This destination-wide food recovery program is a collaboration between Ottawa Tourism and La Tablée des Chefs. By helping chefs save unserved valuable food and redistribute it to community organizations, the program saves meals, avoids unnecessary waste and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. This collaborative pilot program is the result of a partnership with 10 venues and event partners across Ottawa.

This initiative mobilizes the hospitality industry in Ottawa towards a collective vision for food recovery. It builds on existing partnerships to foster a community effort focused on maximizing food recovery across the industry. The program provides concrete data on meals saved, waste diverted and greenhouse gas reductions, supporting the industry's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and event planner's sustainability goals.

Ottawa Tourism as a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) is committed to sustainability. With this partnership with La Tablée des Chefs, we are excited to help chefs recover valuable food and redistribute it to community organizations. We will be able to demonstrate this impact in terms of meals saved, waste avoided and greenhouse gases saved through data collection. Building on the 1.8 million meals saved alone by La Tablée des Chefs in 2022, we are grateful to our members who endorse this initiative so enthusiastically.

- Mary Sayewich, Director, Strategy and Project Management, Ottawa Tourism



GET RESULTS

This program offers a streamlined approach to food recovery without direct involvement from event organizers. Event planners can access measurable data to report on their CSR initiatives, showcasing tangible impact and aligning events with sustainable practices. Additionally, it creates a sense of community and collective responsibility among event planners, venues and partners toward a common goal of reducing food waste and supporting those in need.

NEED TO KNOW



Redistribute unused food to support community members in need.

[Learn more](#)



CULTURAL EXPERIENCE GUIDEBOOK

Québec City, Québec



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



The Cultural Experience Guidebook helps event organizers incorporate Québec City’s rich history and vibrant culture into their events. Through guided tours, visits to historic sites and cultural activities, participants can immerse themselves in the city’s heritage, blending French, English and First Nations influences. Planners can partner with locals to host events at unique venues like museums, historic buildings and Indigenous sites, creating memorable experiences that showcase cultural richness in the city and foster community connection.

Spotlighting history and culture in the region contributes to building sustainable cities and communities. Incorporating a cultural experience into your event supports quality education by providing attendees with opportunities to learn about different cultures peoples, practices, traditions and histories, fostering cultural understanding and appreciation.



This guide reflects our commitment to sustainable and culturally immersive business tourism. By offering attendees unique experiences that celebrate our heritage, we create memorable events and contribute to our community’s legacy.

- Ann Cantin, Director, Communications,
Québec City Business Destination

GET RESULTS

The Cultural Experience Guidebook offers a valuable resource to elevate your events in Québec City. Its emphasis on community engagement, education and cultural celebration provides an innovative approach to integrating sustainability into events. By using the resources and insights offered by this guide, you can create culturally rich event experiences that help your attendees foster a deeper connection with the community.



[Learn more](#)



COMMUNITY PROJECT PLAYBOOK

St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



The Community Project Playbook offers meeting planners in St. John's meaningful Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) opportunities. The project connects planners with partners to increase charitable involvement during events. Activities range from engaging in equine therapy and facility maintenance to preparing meals, building homes, supporting people with autism and organizing food pantries.

This initiative provides opportunities for purposeful CSR engagement, enriching both events and the local community. By connecting planners with diverse activities, it fosters community involvement, addresses pressing social needs and allows your event to create a positive social impact in the host destination.



GET RESULTS

The Community Project Playbook is a tool that simplifies the integration of CSR into your events, demonstrating your commitment to intentional engagement with the local host community. This not only creates a more powerful and memorable event, but also enhances the attendee experience through team-building activities and positive contribution to the host community.

NEED TO KNOW



Engage in unique charity activities to leave a powerful event legacy.



IDEAS GUIDE

Toronto, Ontario



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



The IDEAS Guide is an invaluable resource for meeting planners in Toronto, offering comprehensive information on individuals, businesses and initiatives that promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and eco-conscious events. The guide is packed with expert advice, insights, initiatives, checklists and resources covering inclusive event design, social procurement, accessible transportation options, food waste reduction and more. It also provides tangible solutions for crafting a code of conduct, navigating public and active transportation, connecting with local communities, and facilitating team-building activities.

The IDEAS Guide goes beyond high-level concepts and showcases detailed resources that are available to event planners in Toronto to support DEI and sustainability initiatives. It highlights the city's network of local experts and partners enabling meaningful collaboration and engagement which results in inclusive and sustainable events.



GET RESULTS

Business events can be powerful drivers of DEI and sustainability. By planning intentionally, you ensure attendees feel valued and welcome—and by using the IDEAS Guide, you can execute events that prioritize DEI and the environment.

NEED TO KNOW



Engage with local experts to host equitable, inclusive and sustainable events.

[Learn more](#)



CHARITY GIVEBACK

Victoria, British Columbia



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



Business Events Victoria (BEV) is emphasizing community engagement and environmental sustainability over traditional giveaways. This program provides the opportunity for event planners to reallocate funds that have traditionally been allocated toward giveaways to instead support a local charity. BEV will facilitate a partnership with a charity such as Wear2Start or the Peninsula Streams Society to help your conference leave a lasting positive impact.

The Charity Giveback program reduces waste and carbon emissions by minimizing traditional event giveaways and promoting local community engagement. It gives event planners an opportunity to put sustainable practices and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) into action, emphasizing the importance of a conference's impact and legacy. By prioritizing social and environmental benefits alongside business objectives, this approach benefits the local community and sets a precedent for sustainable event planning.



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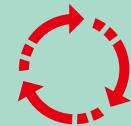
Incredible how much money was raised for the three very deserving charities. Such a great initiative by Destination Greater Victoria.

- Carolyn Leslie, CMP,
Event Management Specialist

GET RESULTS

Through the Charity Giveback program, you can minimize your environmental impact by replacing giveaways with a charity donation. Incorporate a charity giveback into your event to enhance your event's social responsibility profile and contribute to the wellbeing of the local community.

NEED TO KNOW



Substitute your swag and create a lasting positive impact in the host community.

[Learn more](#)



VOLUNTOURISM

Winnipeg, Manitoba



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



Tourism Winnipeg’s Voluntourism initiative streamlines the process of arranging volunteer opportunities for conference attendees. Conference organizers are provided with a list of community volunteer opportunities with established Tourism Winnipeg partners like Habitat for Humanity, Take Pride Winnipeg, Winnipeg Harvest and the Winnipeg Humane Society.

Conference attendees can engage in hands-on activities that contribute positively to the local community while enhancing their experience in the city and creating authentic connections. Through these activities, the community receives additional support and assistance from volunteers, leaving a lasting impact and fostering a sense of goodwill.



GET RESULTS

The Voluntourism initiative provides a straightforward yet powerful sustainability tool for integrating social responsibility into events. By using Tourism Winnipeg’s network of connections with diverse organizations, you can seamlessly integrate volunteer opportunities into your event schedule, providing attendees with a meaningful way to connect with and give back to the local community.

NEED TO KNOW



Integrate voluntourism into your event schedule to build community connections.

[Learn more](#)





ECONOMIC Stories

Harness the transformative power of events as drivers of positive change, fostering economic prosperity while nurturing sustainability at the heart of local communities.

Topics include:

- **Local Economic Impact:** Initiatives to support local businesses and create job opportunities.
- **Sustainable Procurement:** Efforts to enable the use of local and sustainable suppliers and materials.
- **Long-term Economic Benefits:** Actions to ensure events provide lasting economic benefits to the host communities.



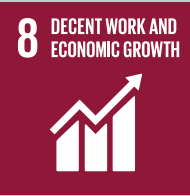


COMMUNITY IMPACT PROGRAM

Banff and Lake Louise, Alberta



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



The Community Impact Program (CIP) is a comprehensive approach to supporting local communities and enabling meaningful experiences for event and conference attendees. The program offers attendees pre-paid CIP Visa cards to spend in Banff and Lake Louise, allowing attendees the opportunity to support local businesses such as hotels, restaurants and shops, and even participate in activities in Banff National Park. A portion of funds from each card goes directly to the client's choice of local charity, in collaboration with the Banff Canmore Foundation (BCF).

This initiative aligns with Banff & Lake Louise Tourism's (BLLT) commitment to maximize impact while minimizing environmental footprint. By eliminating traditional swag and offering attendees the flexibility to use their cards for meaningful experiences, the program relieves pressure from event planners and enhances the overall event legacy by directly supporting the local economy and charities.



I love the charity component of this initiative and the flexibility of being able to spend the pre-paid card on something meaningful to me. I purchased attire from a retailer and every time I wear it, it will evoke the fond memories of my trip to Banff and all it has to offer our clients.

- Julia O'Grady, Owner, ITM Events

GET RESULTS

As an event planner, you benefit from the CIP by gaining the opportunity to enhance your attendees' experience of the destination while demonstrating your commitment to socioeconomic, cultural and environmental sustainability. Giving attendees the freedom to use the cards in a way that aligns with their interests provides a more engaging and memorable event and relieves you from the expectation of needing to provide traditional event swag. Additionally, the program allows planners to report on the positive community impact of the event, focusing on the contributions made to charitable organizations.

NEED TO KNOW



Empower your attendees to support the local economy

[Learn more](#)





SECOND HELPING

Edmonton, Alberta

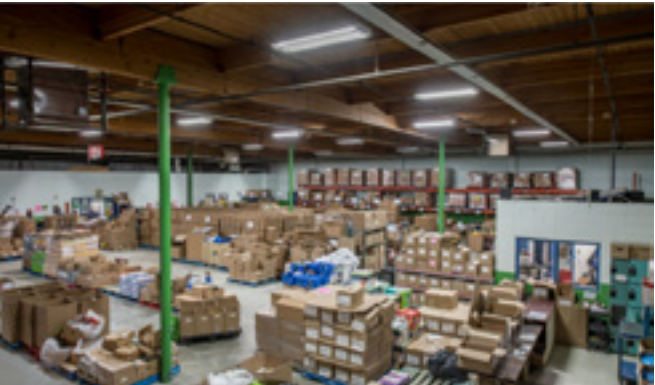


UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



Edmonton Food Bank’s Second Helping is a food recovery program that collects excess food from events and redistributes it to the community. As founding partners of the program, both the Edmonton EXPO Centre and the Edmonton Convention Centre ensure unserved food is packed, refrigerated and collected by the Edmonton Food Bank, which then distributes it to agencies for meal and snack programs. In 2023, both venues combined donated 9,447 kg of food.

Since 2019, the Second Helping program has donated more than 30,000 hot prepared meals to homeless shelters in the Edmonton area. Showcasing a commitment to social responsibility and environmental sustainability within the tourism and the events industry, the Second Helping program effectively reduces event food waste, minimizes the environmental impact of events and helps provide meals for those in the local community who are in need.



GET RESULTS

The Second Helping program provides a simple and impactful way for event planners and attendees to engage in food redistribution. Thoughtful integration of this program into your event allows you to give back to the local community and minimize your event’s environmental footprint.

NEED TO KNOW



Donate excess food to a local food bank to help community members in need.

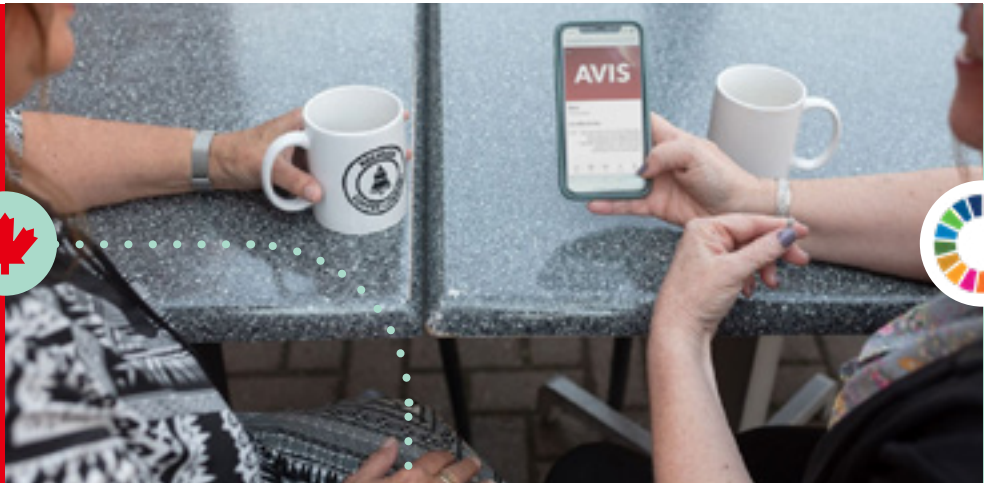
[Learn more](#)





VIRTUAL DELEGATE BAG

Prince Edward Island



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



The Prince Edward Island (PEI) Virtual Delegate Bag is a progressive web app provided for free by Meet PEI to visiting conferences. It serves as a comprehensive digital resource for conference attendees, replacing traditional paper maps, brochures and coupons. The app is designed to minimize waste while promoting local businesses through programs like “Come Early Stay Late” and “Show Your Badge.” Its primary goal is to showcase PEI’s vibrant local business community and encourage attendees to support local businesses during the conference.

The PEI Virtual Delegate Bag decreases waste from physical materials like maps and guidebooks while streamlining the attendee welcome process. With an AI chat support feature in multiple languages, its functionality is accessible and inclusive. The app’s focus on featuring local businesses helps increase community engagement and strengthens connections with local vendors.

I’m immensely proud of what we accomplished so far with the Virtual Delegate Bag. It has opened up brand new conversations with conference organizers about waste reduction in the planning process and has allowed us to make it easier than ever to share what makes PEI special with visiting conferences. Conference delegates in 2023 told us they loved having PEI at their fingertips with the app, and it was so exciting seeing it being used at local shops and restaurants when conferences were in town.

- Sean White,
Marketing & Communications Manager
Meetings & Conventions Prince Edward Island



GET RESULTS

The PEI Virtual Delegate Bag simplifies your attendees’ experience by providing all necessary information in one digital platform and reducing the need for physical materials. This saves costs for you, while minimizing waste and supporting your sustainability efforts.

NEED TO KNOW



Go digital and give attendees a warm welcome to their host destination.

[Learn more](#)



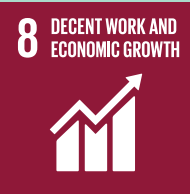


DELEGATE DISCOUNT PROGRAM

St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



The Delegate Discount Program in St. John's offers discounts to local businesses and partners enhancing the overall conference experience in the destination and supporting the local economy. Attendees can redeem offers by showing their badge at participating businesses.

This program boosts local economic development, enhances attendee experiences in the destination and fosters community engagement. Additionally, it contributes to the overall wellbeing and prosperity of the community by encouraging spending within the destination and strengthening local businesses.



GET RESULTS

The Delegate Discount Program helps you demonstrate your commitment to sustainable practices, building positive relationships with local businesses and adding value for attendees. By encouraging responsible consumption and supporting partnerships within the host destination, this program helps encourage your event attendees to contribute even more to the local economy in a meaningful way.

NEED TO KNOW



Empower attendees to shop local and support economic growth.

[Learn more](#)



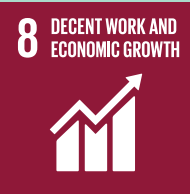


Guide to SOCIAL PROCUREMENT

Vancouver, British Columbia



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



The Guide to Social Procurement for Tourism, Hospitality and Events was developed by Destination Vancouver in collaboration with Buy Social Canada. It aims to guide businesses and planners in incorporating social value into their procurement processes, to create intentional and positive social impacts, recognizing the broad economic, social, cultural and environmental implications of every purchase.

Meetings and events are powerful economic drivers and social procurement principles allow us to make intentional positive contributions to both the local economy and the overall vibrancy of the community. Using the information in this Guide, planners can amplify their event's impact through intentional procurement decisions that consider positive social and community impact alongside price, quality and environmental factors.



“

Destination Marketing Organizations and Convention & Visitors Bureaus are poised to become important partners in creating and measuring the sociocultural and equitable economic value in their communities. This is part of how tourism destinations can be part of going beyond GDP and contributing to the transformation to a wellbeing economy that benefits the entire community.

- Gwendal Castellán, Manager, Sustainable Destination Development, Destination Vancouver

GET RESULTS

This Guide will act as your starting point for your social procurement journey, providing how-to information, outlining common opportunities for social purchasing in events and offering ideas for actions you can take. It will help planners put purpose into practice and provide tools to help create positive social and community impact through spending decisions.

NEED TO KNOW



Procure with purpose to ensure your event makes a positive impact.

[Learn more](#)



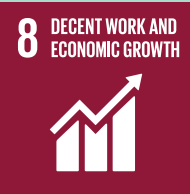


FLASH YOUR BADGE PROGRAM

Winnipeg, Manitoba



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



Tourism Winnipeg's Flash Your Badge Program offers business event attendees discounts at various local attractions, tours and restaurants. Attendees simply show their badge at participating locations to receive the discount. This program encourages attendees to explore more of the city while boosting local spending. Partners include the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Royal Canadian Mint and Assiniboine Park Conservancy.

The Flash Your Badge Program nurtures a deeper engagement with the city of Winnipeg, by encouraging attendees to explore beyond the conference venue. The program contributes to the economic vitality of the destination, fostering growth for museums, attractions and restaurants.



GET RESULTS

The Flash Your Badge Program offers a simple and effective tool to enhance your attendees' satisfaction, as the program incentivizes attendees to explore the city and its attractions, potentially increasing attendance and engagement with the event. It also simplifies your efforts by requiring no additional organization or effort to bring this program to your event.

NEED TO KNOW



Empower attendees to discover the destination and support local businesses.

[Learn more](#)



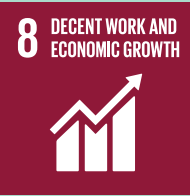


LOCAL POP-UP MARKETS

Winnipeg, Manitoba



UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



Pop-up markets at Winnipeg’s RBC Convention Centre provide attendees with the opportunity to buy locally made products, goods and services during conventions. The market organizers ensure the selection of vendors represents Winnipeg’s diverse community, including Indigenous and Black-owned businesses. This initiative benefits the community and conference attendees, demonstrating the conference organizer’s commitment to social responsibility and contributing to local economic development.

This initiative connects conference attendees, often constrained by time during their visit in the destination, with local artisans. By bringing pop-up markets to the Convention Centre, attendees can conveniently shop locally, fostering cultural exchange and supporting the local economy. The transition from transactional to relational experiences nurtures a deeper connection between visitors and locals.



GET RESULTS

Pop-up markets create a simple and unique way to incorporate supporting local artisans and food producers into your event planning. By partnering with the RBC Convention Centre to organize pop-up markets, you can provide attendees with a unique and meaningful shopping experience while supporting the local economy.

NEED TO KNOW



Immerse attendees in a neighbourhood atmosphere to support local artisans.

[Learn more](#)



CONCLUSION

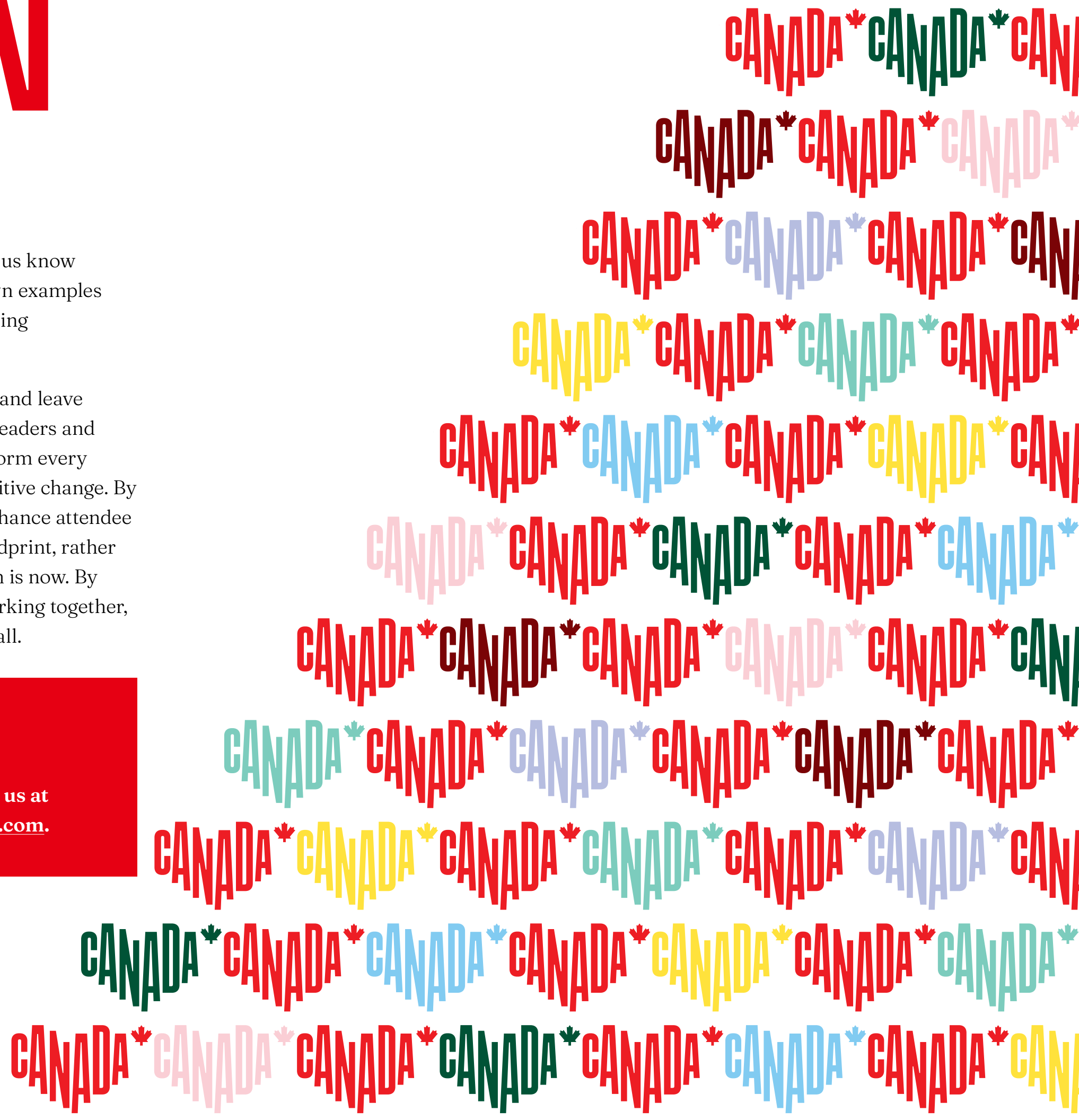
Thanks for reading!

If this storybook has inspired you, please let us know on [LinkedIn](#)—and feel free to share your own examples of business events sustainability solutions using #BEsustainable.

Together, we can make a positive difference and leave a lasting legacy for generations to come. As leaders and business events professionals, we can transform every event into a platform for inspiration and positive change. By prioritizing responsible practices, we can enhance attendee experiences and leave behind a positive handprint, rather than a negative footprint. The time for action is now. By leading by example, inspiring others and working together, we can create a more sustainable future for all.



Learn more about hosting a sustainable event in Canada at businesseventscanada.ca or contact us at businessesvents@destinationcanada.com.



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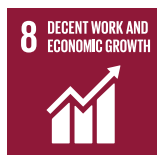
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The programs in this storybook collectively align with most, but not all, of the UN SDGs. This index only includes the SDGs addressed by these initiatives.

THANK YOU

To all of our partners:



Developed in collaboration with:

