

CANADA*

Canada: The home of meaningful meetings



Innovation, creative thinking, vibrant urban centres and unique natural landscapes make Canada the perfect destination for meetings and events.

Canada has garnered attention around the globe for its cosmopolitan cities, jaw-dropping natural landscapes and exhilarating adventures. But did you know that the country is also leading the way across economic sectors—and is home to innovators and creative thinkers who are playing a leading role in reimagining how we live?

When this intellectual capital is combined with the country's vibrant urban centres and unique natural landscapes, it provides a thriving ecosystem for business events that foster creativity, collaboration and, ultimately, leave a lasting impact on attendees and organizations.

"Canada's dynamic cities are welcoming, diverse and home to state-of-the-art convention facilities, making them an ideal setting for any business event," says Virginie De Visscher, Senior Director of Business Development, Economic Sectors for Destination Canada Business Events. "Not only are these cities easily accessible from just about anywhere in the world, they're leading the world's thinking across a range of industries and within touching distance of unparalleled natural beauty."

A nation of innovators

Canada has long been a nation of innovators, and planners can take advantage of the country's extensive knowledge capital to elevate their event.

"We are a country that made the first long-distance phone call, invented the walkie talkie and revolutionized how we communicate and access information with the BlackBerry," De Visscher says. "We built the space shuttle's robotic arm, Canadarm, that was integral to space exploration."

With strong collaboration between industry, academia and government bodies, this drive to innovate is stronger than ever and spans the country's

six key economic sectors: technology, finance and insurance, life sciences, natural resources, agribusiness and advanced manufacturing.

"Today, we are at the forefront of using disruptive technologies to tackle the world's most pressing problems," De Visscher says. "Using cutting-edge tools like robotics, machine learning and artificial intelligence, Canadian companies are combating climate change, elevating the delivery of healthcare, shaping the future of food production and more."

So how does this innovative spirit impact event organizers?

As De Visscher explains, planners can tap into local expertise in destinations



Simon Fraser University,
British Columbia

across the country to enrich events.

"For instance, Halifax is a natural

draw for life sciences events, thanks to an abundance of opportunities to meet world-leading scientists and visit renowned research centres that are tackling the biggest health challenges. Ottawa is a magnet for technology events and conferences, as delegates can visit established tech giants and disruptive start-ups in areas that span from artificial intelligence to cybersecurity. Calgary continues to make enormous strides in clean technology, giving organizers the chance to augment speaker series with passionate innovators who are creating a more sustainable future.”

Once a location is selected based on its economic expertise, planners can work together with Destination Canada Business Events to find creative ways to integrate this knowledge capital into event programming.

“By doing so, planners can create meaningful, purpose-fuelled events and attract more delegates,” De Visscher says. “Associations can also grow their membership and revenue streams, expand opportunities for cross-industry collaboration and advance the careers of delegates through the connections they’ve made while meeting in our destinations.”

The key economic sectors

Organizations that meet in Canada can leverage local knowledge capital in key economic sectors to create engaging, immersive learning and professional networking experiences for delegates.

“Destination Canada Business Events can provide organizations with sector-specific intel that is key to creating meaningful meetings, connecting an organization to their mandate and providing insight into what delegates want to do, experience and who they want to hear from,” De Visscher says.

Here is a quick look at some of the reasons that events specializing in the following key sectors are flocking to Canada.

Technology is among the fastest-growing economic sectors in Canada, with more than 41,500 tech companies and more than 900,000 tech workers based there. Nine of the world’s 10 largest global tech companies have Canadian headquarters in the Toronto-Waterloo Corridor, with one in Montréal.

The world’s 10 largest biopharmaceutical companies are in Canada, most with R&D and manufacturing opera-



OTTAWA TOURISM

tions. In addition to this know-how, there are over 60 professionals across Canada’s venues, convention centres and convention and visitor bureaus who hold the Healthcare Meeting Compliance Certificate, enabling them to better support sector meetings and bolstering the country’s **life sciences** credentials.

Canada boasts a strong, globally competitive finance and insurance sector, with its banking system ranking second in the G20, according to the 2019-20 World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Index. It is home to six of the world’s top 50 safest banks and Canadian cities are at the forefront of fintech innovation.

In terms of **natural resources**, in 2017, Canada’s cleantech sector ranked first in the G20 when it came to the potential to produce clean tech start-ups over the next decade. The country has the world’s largest oil reserves open to free market investment, and it’s the world’s largest producer of potash.

Canada’s **agribusiness** credentials include being ranked eighth in the world for agricultural research, being the fifth-largest global exporter of agri-food products and generating more than \$112 billion in GDP per year.

Canadian innovators are using Industry 4.0 technologies and next-generation manufacturing capabilities to revolutionize how finished products and components are designed, manufactured and distributed across a spectrum of industries and climate conditions, proving Canada’s strength in the **advanced manufacturing sector**.

“Companies and associations that work within these sectors are able to leverage Canadian know-how to dramatically enhance their events,” De Visscher says. “By going on enlightening site tours of unique facilities, hearing from expert keynote speakers and engaging in business-to-business exchanges with industry leaders and innovative start-ups alike, organizations that meet in Canada are able to meet with purpose.”

Continuing to elevate the event experience

Canadian destinations continue to push boundaries and elevate the event experience for organizations that choose to meet in Canada.

The ability to host seamless hybrid events is critically important in today’s meeting environment, and conference centres, hotels and other meeting venues across Canada are providing increasingly high-tech solutions to make hosting hybrid events more turnkey than ever.

“For example, the Palais des congrès de Montréal in Québec launched the CITE Event Innovation and Technology Centre in partnership with MT Lab—North America’s first innovation incubator devoted to tourism, culture and entertainment—to merge live and virtual event experiences,” De Visscher says. “CITE connects event industry innovators

with meeting planners to help create unforgettable events.”

There has also been significant development in some of event planners’ preferred Canadian event destinations.

“One such example is the massive expansion of the BMO Centre in Calgary, which will increase the BMO Centre’s floor space to nearly 1 million square feet. It will be the largest facility of its kind in Western Canada,” De Visscher says.



BMO Centre expansion, Stampede Park, Calgary (rendering)

These, and countless other exciting developments in Canada’s events industry, have attracted significant events to Canada, in 2022 and beyond. Such high-profile events further cement Canada’s status as meeting destination that can accommodate any group’s needs.

Key gatherings in 2022 include IMPAC5, the 5th International Marine Protected Areas Congress in Vancouver, a global forum bringing together thousands of ocean conservation professionals and high-level officials, and AIDS 2022, the 24th International AIDS Conference, attracting scientists, policy-makers and activists to Montréal.

The annual summit One Young World will also be coming to Montréal in 2024, bringing together the brightest young minds from every sector and every country, working together to innovate and accelerate positive social change. In 2028, Vancouver will welcome the World Anesthesiology Conference.

“This annual conference will bring together 9,000 anesthesia and perioperative care providers from over 130 countries,” De Visscher says. “It will provide an extraordinary opportunity to promote science, education, networking and knowledge exchange across the spectrum of anesthesiology.”

Sustainability in action

Sustainability is no longer a “nice-to-have” facet of event planning—it has become a key aspect of the meetings and events industry and, as usual, Canada is ahead of the curve.

Many hotels, convention centres and attractions across Canada have implemented practices to host events that are more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. From cooking with hyperlocal, in-season ingredients to offsetting emissions at convention centres, destinations have taken significant steps to create a more sustainable events industry and a more sustainable world.

Convention centres leading the sustainability charge include the Vancouver Convention Centre, the world’s first and only double LEED® Platinum-certified convention centre; the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, the first North American convention centre to collaborate with Voyage Control to reduce CO2 emissions during event move-in

and move-out; Palais des congrès de Montréal, which is spearheading urban agriculture efforts through its Culti-VERT and VERTical initiatives; and Centre des congrès de Québec, which has a wide range of eco-friendly food and beverage options.

“Canada’s cities, and their destination marketing organizations (DMOs), are also taking steps to help planners make their events more sustainable,” De Visscher says. “For example, Explore Edmonton has partnered with the carbon management company Offsetters to allow event organizers to measure and offset their carbon footprint, Destination Greater Victoria was the first major North American DMO to achieve a carbon neutral designation from Offsetters and Destination Vancouver is promoting sustainable business events through partnerships with social enterprises such as Binners’ Project—an initiative that provides formalized opportunities for urban waste-pickers collecting refundable containers, allowing them to build more consistent revenue and work skills.”

Interested in hosting a meaningful and memorable event in one of the world’s most sought after destinations? Visit businesseventscanada.ca or get in touch with the Destination Canada Business Events team to learn more.

Destination Canada Business Events can:

- Help planners find a destination that’s the right fit for their conference and delegates
- Facilitate introductions to industry leaders, academia and economic development agencies
- Provide recommendations of technical tours, lab visits or expert speakers

Contact:

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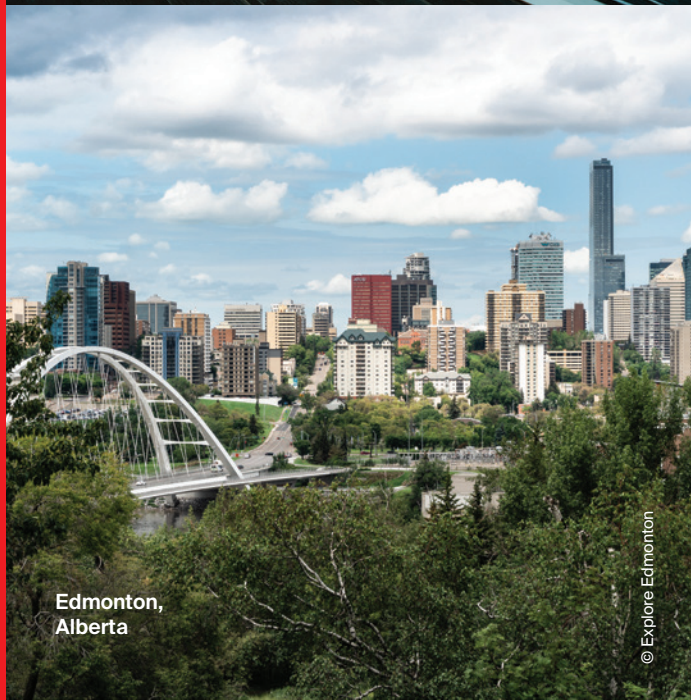


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