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THE CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES OF MEDICAL ASSOCIATIONS

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Artificial Intelligence & Associations

An area of computer science that trains machines to perform tasks that would normally be done by humans, artificial intelligence (AI) has been the talk of the town – and the world – for some time now. Whether it's a negative or a positive thing, we all have been using it at some point without sometimes even knowing it: AI is how Netflix is able to suggest a movie that you will like or how your email filters spam messages that you do not wish to receive in your inbox.

Talking to associations the world over, I have come to the conclusion that some of them are becoming more aware of the power of AI and are actively searching for ways to bring AI into their respective communities, so that they can expand their offerings and improve their operational capabilities.

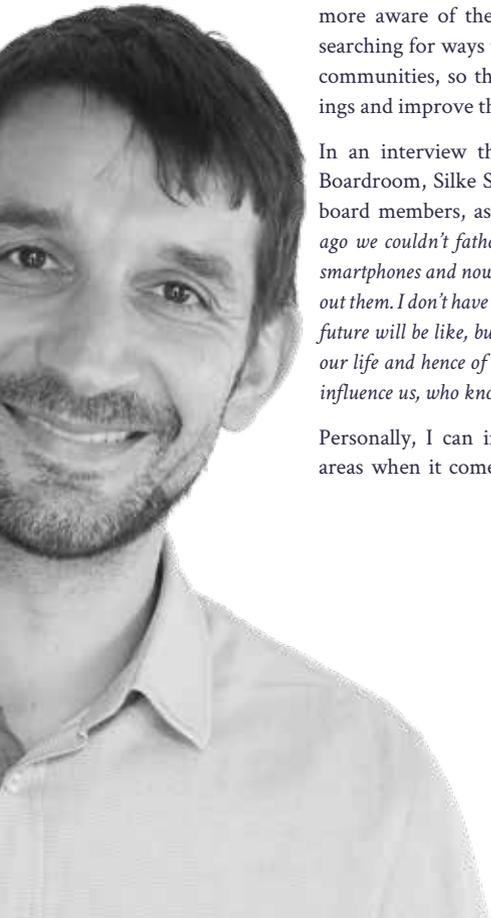
In an interview that was published this year in Boardroom, Silke Schlinnertz, one of our advisory board members, asked herself: *"Less than ten years ago we couldn't fathom how life would be impacted by smartphones and now we can hardly imagine a life without them. I don't have a crystal ball, so I can't say what the future will be like, but I assume AI will become a part of our life and hence of our associations - how much it will influence us, who knows?"*

Personally, I can imagine AI taking over in two areas when it comes to you, associations: the way

you engage with your members and audience on one hand and the way you deal with complicated data on the other.

One of AI's focus areas involves employing cognitive technology to engage with people - the most common example of this being Apple's Siri or Amazon's Alexa. So imagine how a computer programme designed to simulate conversation with human users, especially over the Internet, can become a great tool for nonprofits to engage with and educate their communities. It allows you not only to put the bigger picture together but also to learn more about their needs, provide them with answers at all times, engaging in a tailor-made conversation with them...

AI also has the ability to understand complex data sets and make personal recommendations that would otherwise be hard to appreciate. Associations usually have collected a wealth of information about their members, but also about their sponsors and supporters. So imagine how cognitive technologies can be used to estimate not only event attendance but also engagement or giving patterns. Employing such technologies would allow associations to understand data better, recommend next engagement steps and generate personalised messages. Wouldn't that be a whole new world? Isn't it there already?



Rémi Dève

Founder & Chief Editor



Cécile Volz

Founder & Managing Partner

BOARDROOM ADVISORY BOARD

Boardroom aims to cover a wide spectrum of issues of interest to associations. To do so and stay on top of trends, it works in consultation with an Advisory Board. A constant work-in-progress, Boardroom Advisory Board is made up of experts from non-profit advocacy groups. Recently, the Board welcomed its first member from the Middle-East, David Macadam.



Silke Schlinnertz

Head of Operations & Events, Euroheat & Power

Appointed in July 2014, Silke is in charge of the oversight and management of the Euroheat & Power office, events organisation and relations with Euroheat & Power members and partners. She joined Euroheat & Power in March 2011 from Colloquium Brussels, an international events agency.



Jennifer Fontanella

Director of Operations and Finance, International Studies Association (ISA)

Jennifer has been with ISA since July 2014 when the association moved its headquarters to the University of Connecticut. She is responsible for the management of ISA headquarter staff and has responsibility for managing the ISA's budget and finances as well as coordinating future convention planning.



Giuseppe Marletta

Association Manager, International Association of Young Lawyers (AIJA)

Giuseppe is the Head of the Secretariat, facilitating good governance, supporting AIJA membership and communication strategies, over-seeing AIJA events. Prior to joining AIJA in 2012, he managed several European and International groups and associations, in the field of intercultural dialogue, policy making, project management as well as in the health sector.



Mohamed Mezghani

Secretary General, UITP: Advancing Public Transport

Mohamed worked at UITP as Senior Manager (1999-2001), Director Knowledge and Membership Services (2001-2006) and Senior Adviser to the Secretary General (2006-2013). He also out several technical assistance and training projects in Africa and the Middle-East. He established the UITP office for the Middle-East and North Africa in Dubai.



David Macadam

CEO, Middle East Council of Shopping Centres (MECSC)

A Canadian, resident in the UAE for fourteen years, David has held leading roles in the region with major shopping centre development companies and advisory firms before taking over in 2013 as the CEO of the MECSC. David is a regular contributor to local and international magazines and often appears on television.

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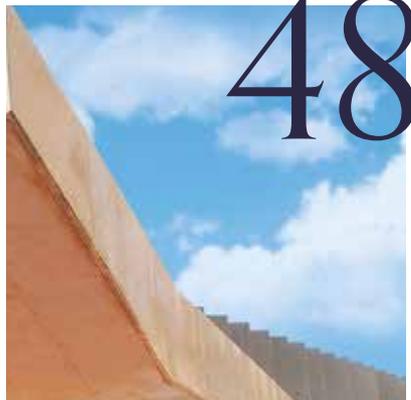


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LAUNCH OF ASSOCIATIONWORLD

ASSOCIATIONWORLD takes a holistic approach towards the development of associations, through four pillars: AssociationInnovation, AssociationPartners, AssociationLeaders & Association360.

From September to December 2018, AssociationInnovation will provide monthly one-day hands-on workshop and experimental learning exercises, both in Brussels and Geneva. In 2019, workshops will expand to Paris, Berlin, Dubai and Singapore. In small and effective groups of 25-40 like-minded association professionals, they will focus on maximizing the experience, learnings and outcomes for each participant.

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- Media and PR
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ASSOCIATIONWORLD's mission is to create excellence in association business management and deliver premium but affordable education for associations and non-profit professionals.

ASSOCIATIONWORLD's vision is to be the most trusted and leading European educational platform and experiential learning experience for associations and non-profit business leaders.

ASSOCIATIONWORLD is an initiative by Kai Troll, together with a multi-cultural professional faculty of globally experienced experts, corporates, institutions and academics.

CASE STUDY OF THE ETHA

How Partnerships Can Increase Impact

Officially launched at the end of last year, the European Thrombosis and Haemostasis Alliance (ETHA) was formed to advocate for better awareness and prioritisation of thrombosis and haemostasis in European Union patient safety and research programmes. Initiated by the International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis (ISTH), it's a revealing example on how international organisations can expand their European –and even global– footprint by being more present formally in an association hub like Brussels.

In our second instalment with the Global Association Hubs Partnership (GAHP), Thomas Reiser, ISTH Executive Director, explains why there couldn't be a better place—or time—for the birth of ETHA.

Interview Rémi Dévé

How did the European Thrombosis and Haemostasis Alliance initially come about?

The European Thrombosis and Haemostasis Alliance is currently comprised of 21 European national, regional and speciality societies representing the field of thrombotic and bleeding disorders. ETHA was formed out of the need for a united voice of the EU thrombosis and haemostasis community in order to represent the field, make recommendations on EU research programme funding and encourage sharing and adoption of best practices in the treatment and prevention of thrombotic and bleeding disorders across EU member states.

The impetus for it came out of a recent ISTH strategic planning exercise. This identified the need for ISTH to seek closer collaborations with—and support the efforts of—national and regional organisations around the world in not only scientific matters, but also in the areas of raising awareness about bleeding and clotting disorders and their impact on public health among the general public and policy makers.

As an international society, you initiated the Alliance. Do you consider this a growth strategy?

Unlike many other medical and scientific fields, in the field of thrombosis and haemostasis a European organisation does not exist. This is probably due to ISTH's strong overall 'presence' in Europe through our activities, members and leaders from Europe, even if we do not (yet) have a permanent physical presence in the EU.

In addition, we at ISTH are very focused on seeking partnerships. We have built, over decades, strong collaborations with over 100 national thrombosis and haemostasis societies around the world. So, it was a natural step for us to initiate the Alliance after consultation with our European sister societies. What was very important for us in this is that while ISTH plays a leading role in the Alliance as a convener, we are not dictating the course of action; we are working alongside the other member organisations to determine the strategy, objectives and tactics.

Achieving impact requires diligent work, patience and persistence and a local presence allows for better insight and access, as well as the ability to build relationships and act quickly when opportunities arise.

While the Alliance in itself is not in support of a growth strategy for ISTH per se, it has the benefit of further strengthening ISTH's position in Europe and provides additional value to the partnerships with our sister organisations.

Do you find this kind of regional federation of sister societies is a business model that 'fits' international associations like yours?

Collaborations among organisations with aligned objectives are (almost) always better than when a single organisation tries to do something. Particularly if it is about having more significant impact on public policy, public health, etc. I think how this specifically can and should look like for any given organisation or field may vary and what the exact governance model is also needs to be determined. For ETHA, we specifically chose a more informal alliance model, but in essence it is about several organisations aligning themselves to pursue the same objectives—and this is where its power lies.

Did it help that you know both Brussels, where you lived and worked, and DC, where you now live and work, as they are both association hubs?

It has certainly helped greatly to have a fundamental understanding of how the EU and 'Brussels' work. But it's also helped to have a cultural understanding (as a European myself) to charter a clear(er) course on how to best approach this project from a policy aspect, as well as how to best collaborate.

We started with the classic approach of conducting a policy audit and stakeholder mapping to identify what the situation is and opportunities may be before going too far into this project. We wanted to make sure there is a real need and opportunity for such an Alliance. Once that was identified, we engaged our European sister organisations to understand their interest. It helped greatly that we were able to tap into all

our existing relationships and find common ground, which was actually quite easy and straight forward.

The European Union and the US, respectively, are two of the largest single markets where associations are welcome and encouraged to be part of the public dialogue and contribute to best solutions for society and business. This allows associations to have substantial influence and the respective capitals, Brussels and Washington DC, naturally represent hubs where organisations could and should be active and – if necessary – be present.

Achieving impact requires diligent work, patience and persistence and a local presence allows for better insight and access, as well as the ability to build relationships and act quickly when opportunities arise. Cities like Brussels and Washington DC can provide a framework for organisations to do business easily and effectively (by providing association hub infrastructure and access to networks of other organisations, facilitating registration processes, etc.) that lower the barriers of entry and operations. This definitely makes it more attractive for organisations to consider a presence there and allows them to focus more of their efforts on doing their important and good work rather than wrestling with bureaucracy.

Were there any challenges along the way?

The greatest challenge was and continues to be that this is a long play that may only yield clear results in several years. Investing financial and human resources, as well as a lot of time from our very dedicated ETHA member leaders, in such a process can be challenging, particularly when you want to measure progress and justify those significant investments. But the end goal is worth it if we can achieve what we set out to achieve—and we believe we can. It will have significant impact on our field, as well as on Europe, in both an economic and social sense, as well as on the health and well-being of its citizens.

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Why Every Association Needs a Social Media Policy

Social media is one of the most effective tools that associations have to communicate directly with their communities; yet many organisations shy away from social media. This may be due to a lack of interest from leadership, limited resources or simply the perception of too much risk associated with social media, particularly for medical associations. Many of these factors can be addressed, at least in part, through the development of a social media policy.

Words Miguel Neves

A social media policy is an internal document with guidelines and rules for the use of social media by an organisation. It must be consistent with the organisation's business strategy and its marketing plans. It can also be a powerful tool to get buy-in from management as it shows a duty of care that helps to build a business case for social media.

One of the most important things that a social media policy does is set expectations for everyone. It sets the rules for those who are assigned to communicate on behalf of the organisation and offers guidance to everyone else. It empowers teams and individuals to be confident that their actions on social media are aligned with the organisation.

CO-CREATION

A social media policy ideally involves the whole organisation and is often created and managed by the marketing team. It should be co-created by various departments including marketing, community management, customer service, human resources, legal and any others that seem relevant. Ultimately it must be approved at top level and should be reviewed regularly, especially when there are changes in laws, internal restructuring or changes in key personnel.



A social media policy does not have to be a complex document. Some of the clearest policies simply ask that employees use their best judgement, but most policies go into more detail. An overview of the social media strategy, an up-to-date marketing plan including brand guidelines and how it links to the overall business strategy is a great place to start.

The social media policy should include details on how each social media platform is set up, who has access and who is responsible for posting and monitoring on behalf of the organisation. It should also clarify how others are expected to use social media at work and outline how employees or members should refer to their relationship with the organisation on their personal profiles. Many organisations ask staff to make clear on their social media profiles that the views are their own and may not represent those of the organisation.

IN THE EVENT OF A CRISIS

A social media policy must address data protection and security, copyright regulations and give direction on how to manage external content. There should also be a social media crisis plan with guidelines on how to deal with offensive or discriminatory content and a link to the full crisis plan for the organisation. Additionally, the policy must make clear any disciplinary actions to be taken in case of breach of the policy.

When something goes wrong on social media, such as a post which is considered offensive or inappropriate it almost always needs immediate attention, yet it may not be considered a full crisis. In this situation it is important that everyone acts according to the organisation's social media policy because how it is dealt with reflects on the whole organisation.

The first step is to acknowledge the issue, understand the reasons why it happened and, if appropriate, remove the post. Direct communication with those involved, in private if possible, is crucial. Depending on the nature of the issue, there may also be a need to communicate externally. Once the issue has been dealt with, assess whether it went against the existing social media policy, and if disciplinary action is needed. The final step is to update the policy so as to help prevent future issues.

GOLDEN RULE

A social media policy only becomes real when it is actively integrated into the day-to-day actions of the team. Not everyone will require training, but everyone should at least be aware of the social media policy. Those who deal directly with social media, even if only through their personal social media accounts, should review the policy.

If an organisation is not active on social media it should articulate the strategic reasons for this in a simple version of a social media policy

and review it periodically. It's important to acknowledge that, even if there are no official accounts, employees or members may be active on social media and can be perceived as speaking on behalf of the organisation. There may also be social media activity around an organisation or an event, even if the organisation itself is not directly involved.

Creating a social media policy is simply a way to officialise an organisation's stance on social media and set the expectations for everyone. There are limits to what can be asked of employees and members. While the most risk averse organisations may want to push for tight controls over all social media this is often counterproductive as it can cause friction with staff and members. An approach that offers guidance and support to everyone on social media is often a better option.

"Don't share anything online that you would not like to see on the cover of a newspaper", that is a golden rule of social media. Following this will keep almost all organisations out of trouble and able to take advantage of social media great potential for direct communication and engagement.

Miguel Neves is the founder of Social Media Chefs, a digital engagement consultancy that uses the language of food to help organisations develop their social media strategy
miguel@socialmediachefs.com



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High Level Learning for Association Professionals at IMEX America

Designed exclusively for association leaders from around the world, the IMEX Association Leadership Forum, launched last year, will take place the day before IMEX America, to be held October 16 – 18, 2018 at the Sands® Expo and Convention Center at The Venetian® | The Palazzo® in Las Vegas.

The IMEX Association Leadership Forum is a free peer-to-peer education and networking programme created by ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership, taking place the day before the show on Monday October 15. The popular and insightful Forum is open to those working at senior leadership level within associations and covers multiple challenges of association management and development.

Association professionals will also be able to take part in Smart Monday, powered by MPI, a wider professional development programme, before ending their day at Association Evening. *“Our Association Evening is a great networking opportunity that really ‘starts the week strong’. It’s always a lovely chance to unwind with your peers, reconnect with old friends and forge new connections before the show begins,”* explains Carina Bauer, CEO of the IMEX Group.

IMEX America, taking place October 16–18, once again offers an enormous range of opportunities to do business, to discover new destinations, hotels, services and technologies, to learn about the latest ideas and trends and to make connections with industry contacts. *“This is the perfect place to progress event projects, having face to face meetings with everyone I want to see all under one roof. I can also arrange my appointments around interesting education sessions - it’s ideal,”* explains Chris Brown from the National Association for Law Placement, based in Washington DC.

At the three-day show, there will also be some eye-opening and mind-opening innovations to extend and disrupt traditional concepts of meetings and events. With IMEX America expanding into larger halls for 2018, IMEX partners and exhibitors will have plenty of room to demonstrate their inventiveness and flex their marketing muscles.

With experiential events dominating this year’s business landscape, IMEX America is set to showcase a wealth of new ideas to planners who are constantly under pressure to deliver new thinking and fresh design. One of the outstanding proponents of these radical, challenging and inspiring new experiences will be C2 International, the ground-breaking experts in innovative business conference. As a result of a new partnership with the IMEX Group, C2 will be bringing its Learning Labs to Las Vegas, providing a further indication of the IMEX commitment to encouraging creativity in the industry.

IMEX America is well-known for providing many networking opportunities at popular co-located events including the Shamrock Invitational, SITE Nite North America, the Events Industry Council Hall of Leaders & Pacesetters Awards Celebration plus MPI Foundation Rendezvous.

Registration is now open - and free.
IMEX America takes place October 16 - 18, 2018 at the Sands® Expo and Convention Center at The Venetian® | The Palazzo® in Las Vegas.
For more information please visit www.imexamerica.com.





The values that
the success of 1
associations wi
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medical
allow them
future.

FEATURE

The Challenges & Opportunities of Medical Associations

The associations sector is vast and hugely diverse. But within this group there's one particular community that appears to have specific challenges: the medical associations. In this feature, we chose to focus solely on them. Compliance, regulations, social media, increasing competition, changing meetings formats are a few of the topics we will deal with here. As such, medical associations need to be agile organisations, especially in this age of disruption. Ben Hainsworth, of K.I.T. Group, doesn't say otherwise in his first – and very special – contribution to Boardroom.

The association is a fundamental building block in the way that most societies organise themselves. You might perhaps expect the Society of Printing Professionals or the Federation of Birdwatchers to have similar models, but the fact is that medical associations have developed a particularly important role in our society and now face set of challenges that reflect not only the reality of their specific profession but also the way in which we perceive them.

This is not entirely surprising when you consider the public's personal interaction with the medical profession as patient, family and taxpayer. In the OECD healthcare represents between 6% and 9% of GDP, with each of us spending €5,000 per year on healthcare and seeing the doctor as many as 9.7 times a year in Germany!

Medical associations share many common characteristics. They typically depend on the voluntary professional activity of individuals to drive a not-for-profit business model. Their business is to represent the interests of the profession, to use collective knowledge to define standards, to define policy and to be a trusted voice for the public. Yet, beyond those similarities, medical associations are hugely diverse in terms of business model, geography, community, size and of course budget - the mix of challenges they are facing will therefore vary from group to group as well.

There are also some fundamental demographic changes that are revolutionising the way healthcare professionals work and how

they come together. Consider the organisational implications of the gender flip in many specialties where women are already outnumbering men, consider the massively divergent but simultaneous expectations of three generations of members and their widely divergent levels of digital literacy. Consider also a global healthcare workplace where not only workers but also disease and epidemics are mobile, where technological advance comes from the least expected source and where previously underestimated importance is given to our lifestyle.

Meanwhile individual work-life balance choices are changing and the commitment to join, contribute and attend society activities may differ from earlier periods. As our society evolves our medical associations are experiencing transformation within.

Regulation and other forms of governance-related disruption are also driving change in the way that medical associations do business. Anti-corruption legislation, healthcare reform, voluntary industry codes, employers, the general public, patient groups are all actively engaging with medical associations and making them rethink almost everything they do. Industry budgets are slashed or re-aligned, grant support is harder to get, board decision making is questioned, committee expertise is disputed, transparency is demanded and your trip to the next world congress is put in doubt.

And the pressure is not only external, governing boards and leadership are increasingly put to task by a new generation of

member, delegate or contributor who expect their voice to be heard. Simultaneously special interest groups are strengthened at a time of ever greater specialisation. Social media only amplify these divergent and often challenging voices, increasing the pressure of internal and external scrutiny.

Most of the issues I mention are expressed in terms of competition for resources, for people, for time and for recognition – all of which are compounded by global financial, economic and political uncertainty. However, we are confident that the very characteristics and values that have driven the spectacular success of the medical association business model will allow them to thrive in the future. Medical associations must defend their independence, leverage their legitimacy and be agile enough to engage their constituencies in new ways.

Read on to see exactly how they are doing so...

Ben Hainsworth is Executive Director of K.I.T. Group, which, for over 30 years, has been serving the association sector, understanding the complexities faced by leaders of not-for-profit societies. Founded in Berlin in 1986. Group has been strategically allied with Messe Berlin since 2010, and has now offices in over 75 countries. Ben is also a PCMA Board Member.
www.kit-group.org





KERRY CROCKETT



TAMEA BLALOCK



KIRSTEN OLEAN

Medical Associations on a Mission

Joint Interviews with Three Association Executives

Kerry Crockett, Associate Executive Director of the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine (ISMRM), Tamela Blalock, Executive Director, of the Section of Women's Health, and Kirsten Olean, Director of Meetings of the American Society for Microbiology, sat down with Boardroom and let us peer into the eventful life of their respective organisations. All sitting on the PCMA Board of Directors, the three seasoned women had loads of interesting insights on the challenges – and opportunities – of running medical associations.

Interview Rémi Dévé

Could you briefly introduce your association?

Kerry Crockett: ISMRM is a multi-disciplinary non-profit association that promotes innovation, development, and application of magnetic resonance techniques in medicine and biology throughout the world. We are a community made up of clinicians, physicists, engineers, biochemists, and technologists-professionals united by a common interest in the ongoing dialogue between the scientific and clinical communities.

In addition, we have a section that is dedicated to radiographers and technologists – the SMRT. The Society for MR Radiographers & Technologists is the leading non-profit organisation that provides an international forum

for education, information and research in magnetic resonance for radiographers and technologists throughout the world. As an organisation, we are committed to promoting communication and the dissemination of cutting-edge MR developments. The objective of the SMRT is to advance education and training, while striving to promote a high level of knowledge and professionalism in the field of MR radiography and technology.

Tamela Blalock: We are the Section on Women's Health of the American Physical Therapy Association (SoWH); a professional association of 3,200+ physical therapists (physiotherapists, PTs) and physical therapist assistants (PTAs) who are specialists in treating pelvic and abdominal health worldwide. Our members provide the latest evidence-based

physical therapy treatment to everyone from childbearing women to peri-menopausal women, youth athletes, and all genders experiencing incontinence, pelvic pain, or other pelvic health complications. SoWH produces the industry standard top-quality continuing education, lab training, certification, and Clinical Practice Guidelines on pelvic and abdominal health physical therapy. SoWH publishes the Journal on Women's Health Physical Therapy, and provides the PT Locator directory, career resources, and networking.

Kirsten Olean: The American Society for Microbiology is among the largest single life science societies, composed of over 30,000 scientists and health professionals. ASM's mission is to promote and advance the microbial sciences. ASM advances the microbial

Like many long-standing associations, we have realised that we must become more modern, more agile, and be ready to adapt to the changes in science and medicine.

KIRSTEN OLEAN

sciences through conferences, publications, certifications and educational opportunities. It enhances laboratory capacity around the globe through training and resources. It provides a network for scientists in academia, industry and clinical settings. Additionally, ASM promotes a deeper understanding of the microbial sciences to diverse audiences.

What have your main challenges been as a medical association?

Kerry Crockett: One of our challenges as an international medical association has been finding the balance between providing accredited education to members worldwide and limited resources. While we accredit our educational content in the US, Australia and the UK, we still have members from all over the world who are not able to receive CME or CE credits from our courses due to the sheer volume of work that would be involved to accredit our content for each country.

We have also been faced with the challenge of communicating the value of magnetic resonance (MR) to the general public. Historically we've only spoken to the MR community, but with information available at everyone's fingertips, we see the need to communicate to the general public in an effort to provide education that will help them understand the value of MR and how it can play a positive role in their health care.

Tamela Blalock: Through my lens I only see opportunities. SoWH, and other medical associations, have the opportunity to connect with the general public on their medical treatment options. For SoWH, that opportunity is to support the #ChoosePT movement, especially to amplify how physical therapy is a viable solution for pain management. Focusing on the pelvic region, we also are taking this opportunity to amplify the message that there is non-surgical relief from pelvic pain and incontinence (urinary/bowel).

The great news is that there is a feast of medical specialties and expertises that have life changing solutions for the global community. The challenge (or opportunity) is that there are so many options and messages to communicate. We need to find a way to streamline these options so that they are more accessible to the general public.

Kirsten Olean: ASM represents a very diverse membership, encompassing the full spectrum of microbiology from basic science to translation and application. Therefore, we are both a scientific and a medical association which makes us different than other associations that strictly serve medical professionals. Like many long-standing associations, we have realised that we must become more modern, more agile, and be ready to adapt to the changes in science and medicine. Under new

leadership the past two years, we have undertaken significant changes in governance, meetings and publishing to enable us to better respond to changes in the microbial sciences and better serve our members.

Do increased regulations and compliance rules from government bodies within Europe, but also from the industry regulators, implementing more stringent codes and guidelines, have an impact on American medical associations, especially when organising meetings outside the US?

Kerry Crockett: Yes, as an international organisation we have to be cognisant of new rules and regulations that can impact our ability to provide education to our members and the MR community at large. One example of this is the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regulation in the EU that went into effect 25 May 2018. Thirty-one percent of our membership resides in the EU so this is affecting how we are able to advertise to them.

Tamela Blalock: On regulations I take a historical view. Regulations (in general) serve to protect the community from harm. They created the normalised practice of work weeks and weekends, defined humane hours for a work week, discontinued legal use of children as manual labor supply, and established

As associations we are charged to experiment and innovate on behalf of the industry. Perhaps we are the architects to find a scalable solution for global access to quality healthcare.

TAMELA BLALOCK

As an international organisation we have to be cognisant of new rules and regulations that can impact our ability to provide education to our members and the MR community at large.

KERRY CROCKETT

a foundation for equal access to career opportunities for all adults. Regulations have also been utilised to produce harm as in the long history of “redlining” in the United States.

What is certain is that regulations are implemented to produce a desired outcome. When viewing the increased regulations (e.g. GDPR), the desired outcome is to empower European Union residents to have ownership over their consumer data. This is a very bold regulation, and it appears to have earnest intentions. If a leader accepts the intentions, then they will embrace the change and implementation. Change is never convenient, however, it is always constant. In my experience a resistance to change is either a disagreement with the intended outcome of a regulation, or discomfort with the process of change.

Kirsten Olean: ASM currently hosts its meetings within the United States, and even though we are the American Society for Microbiology, our membership is global and we do have to consider regulations from any region as part of our planning process. We have been fortunate that we have not seen a significant decline in international attendance at our meetings, and we still have a robust exhibit and sponsorship programme.

Is the association world becoming more and more competitive as many

organisations go global and many subspecialty associations are being created?

Kerry Crockett: Absolutely. The internet has essentially erased borders and has allowed for the unfettered sharing of ideas and education. Associations who never thought of themselves as international are now likely communicating to, and have members from, countries all over the world. The marketplace has become more crowded and it is more difficult than ever to distinguish your value above associations with similar content and benefits. For example, the ISMRM and SMRT are competing with MR associations in Europe and Asia for the same members. We are challenged with issues such as language barriers and communicating what differentiates us from their local organisation. What would make them want to select us as their association of choice as compared to one within their own country?

Subspecialty organisations pose another issue for associations as the desire and expectation for personalised and targeted education becomes the norm. Big data can play a vital role in identifying what specific information members want but not all organisations have the capability nor the resources to provide the content or customised service that their members may want. This leaves a vacuum for

general associations which presents an opportunity for subspecialty associations. The key is trying to find areas that can be targeted to specific audiences within your association and building on them.

Tamela Blalock: Again, through my lens, I only see opportunity. This a perfect opportunity for collaborations among associations and specialty focused associations, particularly among the global medical association community. As associations we are charged to experiment and innovate on behalf of the industry. Perhaps we are the architects to find a scalable solution for global access to quality healthcare. However, we will never be able embrace that challenge, until we embrace this opportunity to collaborate with each other to improve outcomes for our members, stakeholders and communities.

Kirsten Olean: The association world has always been competitive, but I believe that factors such as limited time and limited funding have a greater impact than expanded global reach and the proliferation of subspecialty associations. If an association remains focused on the needs of their members and develops the right products and services to meet those needs, it will continue to remain relevant and valuable to the community it serves.

The Often-Feared Issues of Compliance, Regulation & Industry Relations

With global trends showing an increase in world population at 8.5 billion by 2030 and 9.7 by 2050, according to the newest UN figures, such developments offer some real opportunities as well as challenges to the association market.

Words Christoph Raudonat

Rising living standards and fewer people living in absolute poverty offer unique opportunities for associations to innovate and work to educate these emerging markets with bespoke programmes, benefits, international professional standards and engage in knowledge transfer, certifications, networking to name but a few possibilities. In particular, associations will be faced with the challenge to a) identify growth markets, b) determine which business models will be best suited for maximum engagement, and c) how to fit these models to an appropriate growth strategy to foster this engagement.

STRINGENT RULES

For a few years now, medical associations have felt the stress of diminished income through, among others, sponsorship contributions or even direct operating budget support from industry partners. Where in the first decade of the 2000s industry may have supported medical associations' budgets with up to 60%, and sometimes more, through sponsorships, advertising and patient education, this support has come under increased scrutiny from the public eye in recent years. Most notably,

abuse of anti-fraud regulations, exorbitant consultancy fees paid to practitioners and surgeons, and 'kick backs' from big pharma have caused more stringent rules and regulations to be applied to the healthcare industry all over the world.

What is it that modern medical associations can do to navigate the complex world of compliance rules, maintain an appropriate relationship with governments on the one side and industry on the other?

Medical practitioners list a variety of benefits they enjoy and find useful and thus attach value to continuing membership with professional bodies, such as associations nationally and internationally. These lists usually start from simply benefitting from educational and knowledge exchange programmes, continuous education credits (CME) and the opportunity to network with peers and relevant industry partners. In addition, many associations offer opportunities to publish scientific articles of high academic value in their journals, develop clinical databases for the use of their members, and engage in dialogues with governments and industry alike to represent and uphold the values of the medical profession. Some

associations have even ventured into financial markets offering insurance and other products to their members. While this may read like a laundry list it shows the resilience and creativity of some professional bodies to remain at the forefront of relevance in the global association market.

Recent surveys have shown that, although a diverse range of benefits is certainly advantageous, it is but a fraction of the benefits experienced during a global summit or world congress. Practitioners feel more than ever that there is nothing as useful as meeting in person and having the chance to engage in discussions, debates and other learning activities, while having access to the newest trends in the healthcare industry. The impact of such gatherings is clearly not to be underestimated and their attractiveness to new markets still has room for deeper exploration.

Industry relations are important in this scenario of venturing out into the great wide world and industry supports large parts of congresses and activities of medical societies. Whether it is through support of patient-education (a prominent case being the relationship between the American Association

of Family Practitioners AAFP and The Coca Cola Corporation on the research into obesity), advertising in medical journals, product endorsements, and/or financial support of (graduate) education programmes and awards.

ETHICAL ENGAGEMENT

While it is safe to say that industry provides large support overall to the benefit of medical associations, making significant financial contributions, criticism arises as to the potential pitfalls and trade-offs when not-for-profit organisations are being supported by for-profit entities. Even more questions arise around established norms as well as the responsibility of medical societies towards their members, patients and societies at large. Ethical concerns are at the forefront here and maintaining a neutral stance can often be a challenging balancing act.

As societies therefore look to the future and explore new ways of engaging with their environments, public affairs move to the core of a society's life. Ethical engagement is the buzzword of future generations and in order to differentiate and free self-governance and independence from conflict of interest it is

worth spending a thought or two on the creation of a set of ethics rules and/or an ethics policy. A clear outline on which activities, relationships and engagements are indeed to the benefit of a society's stakeholders and how to address potential risks of conflict are vital to determine a society's position *vis-à-vis* its interest groups. This is certainly an easier approach than trying to evaluate and handle each relationship and potential risk on a case-by-case basis.

Having a set of rules and guidelines at the ready also facilitates engaging in newly developed markets. Past mistakes can be avoided from the beginning and a society can prove its maturity and value the more developed and grounded its ethics and policy basis is in relation to the work it carries out.

In fact, it opens itself to becoming a learning organisation itself and becoming a strong partner for local authorities to develop appropriate and modern standards. This, in turn, may assist industry in accessing new markets as well and adjusting their efforts towards ethical and environmentally compliant behaviour to the benefit of society.

Organisationally responsible behaviour has never been more in fashion as today and current trends show that responsible engagement needs to be deeply anchored in the values of any organisation if it is to survive. The challenges of greater interconnectedness, AI and further automation require new standards also in transparency rules. Being prepared by means of appropriate ethics rules that address the handling of conflicts of interest openly strengthens and stabilises not only continuous community engagement but also the bottom line.

This article was provided by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers, author Christoph Raudonat, Director of Associations, International Conference Services Ltd. on behalf of IAPCO President, Mathias Posch. IAPCO represents today 130 companies comprised of over 7500 professional congress organisers, meeting planners and managers of international and national congresses, conventions and special events from 41 countries.
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Patients Are a Virtue

Medical associations are discovering that inviting patients onto their stages and into their conference-planning committees have far-reaching benefits for their members.

Words Barbara Palmer

When Dr. Leslie Kernisan, a geriatrician who practices in San Francisco, first attended the Stanford Medicine X conference at Stanford University in 2013, the most remarkable innovations she encountered, she later recalled, weren't in tech advances or brilliant breakthroughs in research. Instead they were in the level of involvement by patients, who told their personal stories on stage and around the table during meals and who took part in brainstorming health-care solutions and in presenting new technologies, she wrote in a blog post after the event.

Medicine X was founded on the premise that health-care innovation is accelerated when everyone — patients and caregivers, along with health-care providers and researchers — is included. The presence of patients “packed a powerful punch,” Kernisan wrote, and “left me wishing that more academic conferences were like this.”

'A PARADIGM SHIFT'

Kernisan's wish is more and more likely to be granted. Over the last decade, there has been a slow-moving revolution toward leveraging the advantages that accrue to both health-care professionals and patients when they can play a meaningful role at medical meetings.

From specialised meetings like Medicine X, in which patient involvement is part of the conference DNA, to meetings such as the European Respiratory Society (ERS) International Congress, where they take a much smaller but vital role, patients are now cropping up on conference-planning committees, as speakers and panelists, and as meeting

participants. And at those organisations that embrace patient perspectives, leaders describe the results as game-changing.

In some instances, the move toward including patients has come about as a result of a personal epiphany. Speaking in 2010 at a technology conference on digital health in Dubai, Lucien Engelen, now director of the REshape Center for Health(care) Innovation at the Radboud University Nijmegen Medical Centre in the Netherlands, asked the audience if any patients were present. Not a single hand was raised. Engelen decided then and there not to accept any more speaking engagements at conferences where patients weren't represented and subsequently wrote the first draft of a 'Patients Included' charter, now used to set standards for patient involvement at meetings.

At the European Lung Foundation (ELF), a patient-centered organisation founded by the European Respiratory Society (ERS) and based in Sheffield, U.K., the shift toward patient involvement was more gradual. “It's been 10 years, really, of evolution,” said Pippa Powell, ELF's director.

ELF was founded in 2001 to raise funds for ERS, an effort that initially failed to launch, Powell said. That led to the realisation that there was a big gap in ERS communication, “in that it focused so much on professionals and it didn't focus on patients or the public,” Powell said. “The fact that we couldn't raise money really rang alarm bells, because when people don't understand lung disease, they don't have empathy for people with lung disease and there isn't enough funding for lung disease.”



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ELF responded by building a network of patient organisations working in respiratory illness and connecting it to ERS, Powell said. *“We said, ‘Look, we want to make sure that professionals and patients are talking the same talk and working together — we can invite you to the conference, have you as part of it, where you can build relationships with the professionals.’”*

ELF started by offering scholarships to patient organisations to come to the annual conference and attend sessions, so they could go back to their own countries and their own disease areas and share that information, Powell said. *“So for us that was the real beneficial starting point, making sure that these organisations have access to the latest research and developments so they can communicate that.”*

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

Over time, strong partnerships have developed between the professional community and the patient community, Powell said. At the annual ERS International Congress, which typically has 25,000 attendees and is the world’s largest meeting in the respiratory field, approximately 150 attendees are patients or patient representatives. Though their numbers are small, she said, there are sessions where patient speakers *“really set the tone.”*

Just inviting representatives from patient organisations to attend a conference is a good first step, Powell said. *“Patient organisations are delighted to be able to come and take part in the conference — they get lots out of it and then they are able to go back to their communities and talk about how the organisation is a leader in the field and that’s where they get their information from. I would*

say that’s a simple starting point and a simple win-win that doesn’t require that much investment or time.”

And their influence and perceived value at ELF is such that, now, Powell said, *“we’re overwhelmed by the questions of ‘Can patients come sit on this board?’ ‘Can patients come and do this?’ ‘Can we make sure there are patients involved in that?’ And that’s not us, that’s us responding to the [health-care] professionals who want patient involvement. So it really has been a massive paradigm shift and a really positive one.”*

Powell often hears from ERS researchers and health-care professionals that exposure to patients at meetings allows them to better understand their day-to-day realities — something that can get lost in bigger discussions about complex issues, she said.

For patients, *“sometimes the things that are important to them are really simple,”* Powell said. *“Yes, they want research, and yes, they want progress in their disease area — but they also just want to be able to enjoy their life to the best of its potential.”*

Barbara Palmer is senior editor and director of digital content of *Convene*, the magazine of the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), and a partner of Boardroom

convene



A Warm Welcome to Medical Conferences

Maurits van der Sluis, COO at RAI Amsterdam, explains how international medical conferences in Amsterdam receive tailored advice to ensure that they meet relevant European regulations.

Medical conferences must comply with local rules in every country. In Europe these rules tend to apply on an EU-wide level. In particular, regulations for the advertising of medications can affect the organisation of a conference. In Amsterdam, we have set up a partnership to provide advance independent tailor-made advice to organisers about the possibilities. This will help them begin their conference safe in the knowledge that they are in compliance with all regulations.

Although they are embedded in national legislation, the regulations regarding medications for human use are the same throughout Europe. In addition, the European umbrella organisation for self-regulation EFPIA has drawn up an international code of conduct. In the Netherlands, these components are combined in the Dutch Code of Conduct for Pharmaceutical Advertising (*Gedragscode Geneesmiddelenreclame* or CGR). For organisers of medical conferences, one section of the CGR is particularly relevant: prescription medications may only be advertised to professionals, that is, people who prescribe or deliver drugs, such as physicians and pharmacists. Fortunately, it is actually quite easy to keep track of this, with a bit of help.

INDEPENDENT ADVICE

In Amsterdam, the municipality, NBCT Holland Marketing (the entity responsible for branding and marketing the Netherlands), RAI Amsterdam, the Ministry of Health and the Keuringsraad work closely together to ensure that the organisation of each medical conference proceeds smoothly. The Keuringsraad plays a key role in this regard, as it oversees compliance with the CGR and advises conference organisers about this topic. We bring organisers of medical conferences in touch with the right person at the Keuringsraad at the start of the preparations. The organisers can then explain their plans and are given advice on what is and is not permitted, and what the possible alternatives are.

In many cases, it is necessary to register the profession of the visitors and ensure that it is clearly visible on their badges. This opens up several alternatives in terms of layout. A part of the show floor could only be accessible to professionals, for instance. Another option is that exhibitors only be allowed to recommend drugs in one-on-one contact with professionals. With major events that are focused primarily on professionals from

abroad (and not patients), the conclusion can even be that organisers need take no extra action as the majority of visitors fall within the category of professionals (badges are always handy, of course). The Keuringsraad can give a definite answer on this.

SHORT LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Other components to keep in mind are the content of the presentations, the hospitality offered and gifts. The general guideline is that pharmaceutical companies cannot be allowed to influence professionals improperly. The Keuringsraad can provide information on this subject as well.

We can also invite the Keuringsraad to send representatives if the organisers visit RAI Amsterdam in advance with the most important delegates, allowing them to ask questions. Finally, the Keuringsraad can be consulted via telephone during specific times.

THE PRACTICE IS SIMPLE

While the rules may seem complex, the practice is simple. You do not need to have studied law: simply explain the concept of your conference and you will receive a personal opinion based on that. In the case of large-scale international conferences for medical professionals, you may not even have to take any measures at all; in other cases, careful organisation of the conference can ensure that you comply with all the rules. RAI Amsterdam will be pleased to put you in touch with the right people. This lets you start your conference with confidence and frees up your time to enjoy all the other fine things Amsterdam has to offer.

AIPC represents a global network of over 185 leading centres in 60 countries with the active involvement of more than 900 management-level professionals worldwide. \ marianne.de.raay@aipc.org \ www.aipc.org



Jeremy Rees

Associations Bring Value to Destinations

The number in London's life sciences sector speak for themselves. 1,904 life science companies, 8,000+ healthcare companies, 5 world-class medical schools, 40 universities, 12 teaching hospitals, 1,300 biomedical researchers... on and on the list goes. It's only understandable, then, the capital of the UK is a destination of choice for medical association planners. Jeremy Rees, Acting CEO of ExCeL London, shares his insights on the latest trends in association meetings.

Interview Rémi Dévé

Has the way you work with medical associations changed over the last years?

Associations are having to work harder to attract delegates to their congress, and to use the congress to support the aims of the association. Technology is very important, to enhance and support the physical attendance at a congress. 'Creative meeting design', the need to move away from the standard lecture format looking ahead to the next generation of delegates... venues need to offer creative solutions to meet these requirements. So, yes, the way we work with associations has definitely evolved.

Associations are very aware of what their value to a destination, and therefore expect more in return: city activation, legacy, government recognition. A key contributor to our success has been to ensure we create a bespoke strategy for each bid. This enables us to tailor our bid to meet the key objectives of each individual congress, whether that is to help grow their attendance, achieve a greater global outreach or increase educational or scientific content.

With each event hosted at ExCeL we look for opportunities to support the organiser with extending the life cycle of the congress. This usually involves working with London & Partners to facilitate something like ESC's Heart Trail, which promoted healthy hearts and healthy lifestyles.

What are the latest trends in medical association meetings according to you?

Recent experiences across the globe have shown that security will remain a top priority for planners throughout 2018. Collaboration between venues and organisers is crucial. By working together, not only can we

ensure that the appropriate measures are put in place but also that they are communicated effectively to anyone attending events, in advance.

Our research has also demonstrated that events remain a vital part of the marketing and communications mix. To ensure that planners attract the audience they want, increasingly there is a desire to be in a global city. It is therefore essential that organisers plan ahead to guarantee they can host their event in their chosen city, venue and, more importantly, in their preferred date line. The result of this trend is that we are seeing clients looking to secure dates earlier in the planning cycle.

There may also be an appetite to spend less time at events. Not only do the events themselves have to be a valuable experience but venues need to be easily accessible. We believe planners will be attracted to cities which, for example, continue to invest in their transport network.

Are you targeting any specific medical specialities?

Due to the strength of London's life sciences sector, the city is a centre of excellence for all medical specialities. For bids, we undertake specific sector research to really understand where London's expertise lies and how this can benefit the congress, both in terms of the event and a lasting legacy for the city. We aim to identify a unique reason for each speciality to bring their event to London, ensuring that we help each association deliver on their own objectives. This has also included working with organisations outside of London, such as Meet Cambridge, providing association planners with introductions to key contacts at one of the world's leading universities. 2017 was a strong year in terms of winning bids for future years. This included ESC (European Society of Cardiology) in 2021 and ISMRM (International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine) in 2022.



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Adelaide

Setting the stage for South
Australia's conference scene

A few years ago, Adelaide may have seemed like another Australian city with no clear-cut identity, but it has since transformed itself into a destination attracting attention from associations all over the globe. It helps, of course, that urban revitalization projects are everywhere to be seen, with some exciting architectural rejuvenation among the city's art venues, museums, and downtown residential and office buildings. This attention also stems from another source: the city's ambition to being a medical and life science leader on the world stage.

WORDS RÉMI DÉVÉ



With a population of just over one million people, a Mediterranean climate, and a relaxed lifestyle, Adelaide, South Australia's capital city, has enjoyed steady growth in recent years. While it can feel like a large town at times, there is also a great deal of open space and parkland, as well as new hotels, restaurants, and bars sprouting up throughout the city, making it a vibrant destination to visit year-round. Two of Adelaide's festivals—the Adelaide Festival and Fringe Festival—are well known throughout the country and beyond, adding a certain *art de vivre* that's quite unique for Australia. And, of course, there are attractions like pristine beaches sitting just a short tram ride away from the city centre, as well as the nearby McLaren Vale and Barossa Valley, perfect for off-site activities like wine tasting and kangaroo feeding.

The commitment to renewed infrastructure, coming directly from the South Australian state government, is most evident in Adelaide, where construction crews are busy transforming the city's major streets and River Torrens into scenic, urban landscapes. Huge investment has been made in the Adelaide Riverbank, a downtown convention, entertainment and research precinct dedicated to business meetings and conventions, medical research, educational facilities, the arts, and sports.

Just a few of the projects include the new Adelaide BioMed City life sciences cluster, the largest one in the Southern hemisphere, spearheaded by the futuristic-looking South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI)—a fascinating floating object that conducts collaborative interdisciplinary research with South Australia's three universities and the new Royal Adelaide Hospital. You'll also find new landscaping at the Adelaide Festival Centre; the redevelopment of Festival Plaza and the Adelaide SKYCITY Casino (works for which are both currently in progress); and last but not least, the newly expanded Adelaide Convention Centre—all interconnected by walkways and a river footbridge.

An integrated environment

Simon Burgess, general manager of the Adelaide Convention Centre, explains: *"We have a facility in Adelaide that can accommodate world-class conferencing, and we are busy telling association planners so. I truly believe that innovation is the key to the future of conferencing, and here at Adelaide Convention Centre, we're very much ahead of the curve. The expansion that now allows us to bid for larger events, the high flexibility of the venue, the increased investment in technology, the involved*

community—all of this makes us sit in a very unique, differentiated place at the moment. The development of BioMed City has also certainly helped grow the profile of Adelaide in medical circles and led to an estimated 10 percent increase in medical conference enquiries.”

The redevelopment Burgess refers to was completed last year, coinciding with the venue’s 30th anniversary. The expansion not only significantly increased the Centre’s capacity (it now comprises three distinct yet seamlessly integrated buildings, spanning 20,000 sqm total event space), but also resulted in a ‘new breed’ of convention centre in terms of flexibility. As evidence of the latter, the main Plenary Hall can be arranged into more than 15 different configurations. This new versatility coupled with the venue’s larger footprint has certainly increased the Centre’s appeal to the international associations market.

A great testament to the Centre’s new international capability is the 68th International Astronautical Congress, held just weeks after the opening of its new East Building in September 2017. Not only was the event one of the largest in IAC history but it was also the largest business event ever held in Adelaide, proving the city now has the capacity and expertise to successfully host big events on an international scale.

There’s a strong drive from the Centre’s team to keep this momentum going. And, indeed, Adelaide is increasingly attracting more and more medical conferences: they now account for about a third of business at the Adelaide Convention Centre, with more than a dozen medical-related events, each with more than 1,000 delegates, confirmed over the next two years. The Adelaide Convention Bureau, together with the Centre, has developed a strong network of ambassadors, as well as close relations with SAHMRI, bringing in medical meetings, conferences, and conventions to the city. Adelaide also appeals to associations working in the field of minerals and energy, bioscience, defence, aerospace, education, advanced manufacturing, and aquaculture, working with a unified approach and ‘close proximity’ concept that makes it very unique.

Two university campuses and nearby medical research centres are perfect for pulling speakers and additional delegates alike. Pair these resources with the redeveloped Adelaide Oval next door, which serves as the perfect venue for gala dinners with a sport twist, and it’s easy to see all of the benefits Adelaide’s fully integrated Riverbank Precinct offers convention visitors. Just a short walk from the city’s newly expanded Convention Centre you’ll come across hotels,

restaurants, and attractions, all easily accessible thanks to free tram travel in the city centre which allows visitors to quickly get around. Who could ask for more convenience? Damien Kitto doesn’t say otherwise: *“Adelaide is ideally placed as a conference destination. The easy access and navigation, the combined location of the Centre within the cultural and medical precincts, the new face of the riverbank, and the many possibilities of pre- or post-conference tours allows us to offer the ‘total package’ to participants.”*

“Feedback always says engagement is higher when a conference takes place here – from a delegate, a speaker, but also from a community point of view – partly because we have managed to put everything in such [close] proximity. I also believe this is due to the city attracting international talent and fostering local researchers, creating knowledge and expertise across a broad range of medical fields, including the crucial areas of cardiology, oncology, and endocrinology. As the life sciences sector has evolved in Adelaide, so has the knowledge and sense of innovation.” Damien adds.

Case Study: Supportive Care in Cancer

This is exactly what happened at the 2016 MASCC/ISOO Annual Meeting on Supportive Care in Cancer, which was held at Adelaide Convention Centre in June 2016. According to MASCC President Ian Olver *“innovation was a particular aim of the meeting,”* which attracted over 1,070 delegates from more than 50 countries, with a sizable turnout from Australia and Asia. At the time, MASCC had traditionally met either in North America or Europe, but momentum had been building to host the MASCC symposium in Australia for several years, and there was a growing desire to be more global, since the forum gathers world-leading experts to discuss the latest scientific developments and cutting-edge research in supportive care in cancer.

Adelaide was selected based on a number of criteria. Scientific Program Co-Chair Dorothy Keefe explains: *“Supportive care is ultimately about improvements in care, management of the side effects of cancer treatment—both physical and psychological—prevention of secondary cancer, prolong survivorship, and maximization of quality of life. The work we are undertaking at Adelaide’s BioMed City and in our universities within this field are ground-breaking and gaining worldwide recognition; it just made sense to hold the meeting*

in the South Australian capital. At the time it took place, the city had also just completed its new Riverbank precinct with a new hospital, research institute, convention centre and university buildings. The revamped infrastructure and easiness of use was impressive."

According to Dorothy, Adelaide is a perfectly sized city for a conference, since it is compact, close to the airport, and offers hotels and facilities within walking distance. *"Now that the Royal Adelaide Hospital and medical school are open, it will be even better. The hotels are also very good, and the choice of restaurants is fantastic—the best sitting within a stone's throw from the Centre. Safety is also increasingly important, and Adelaide is one of the safest cities. And, of course, we boast such wonderful wineries and natural beauty within a very short travel distance,"* she adds.

The Symposium definitely enhanced Adelaide's reputation as a wonderful conference destination, as well as an emerging arts venue (a much-appreciated art exhibition was held during the conference) and place where patients are at the heart of supportive care in cancer. *"The legacy components of the meeting were threefold. We were able to engage the Asia-Pacific region like never before and increased the presence of MASCC and its membership in the region. South Australia became better known to the participants as a wonderful destination. We had many visitors from the USA, Europe, and Asia, and a large number of them would have known of Melbourne or Sydney before but were delighted with Adelaide. The focus on the region also led to an increase in the knowledge of supportive care and long-term patient benefits. It showed how well the city works for visitors and for conferences. It also changed MASCC; there had never been dancing at a MASCC President's dinner before!"* Dorothy said.

360-Degree Innovation

Another example of Adelaide's sense of innovation lies in the Tonsley Innovation District, a mere 20 minutes from the city centre. Australia's first true innovation district, the site, currently under development at a converted Mitsubishi car plant, is home to a mixed-use development: strong academic and training institutions; global companies and start-ups; and research and industry networks—all sitting under the one roof. It offers investors a collaborative environment that supports high-value industry and innovative product and service development, with an emphasis on

biomedical devices, sustainable energy, and clean technology.

One institute you'll find located at Tonsley is Flinders University's Medical Research Institute (MDRI), which connects researchers and industry, in addition to housing the local hub for MTPConnect, an Australia-wide organisation growing medtech, biotech, and pharma industries. Major tenants include medical device manufacturers Micro-X, Siemens, and Zen Energy, or ZEISS, the international optical and optoelectronics firm. There are even companies like Plastico and Hackett Engineering that have shifted their focus from mineral analysis equipment development to components for orthopaedic implants due to the downturn in world commodity price.

As a whole, South Australia is emerging as a technology hub for medical devices and pharmaceuticals, with high-growth, innovative companies exporting to global markets. South Australian-manufactured products include ultra-lightweight medical X-ray units (such as the first carbon nanotube-powered X-ray system in the world), laser, ultrasound equipment, micromanipulation pipettes, and genetically-engineered biologic medicines.

With a specific focus on the high-value manufacturing sector, Tonsley's masterplan incorporates collaborative meeting and work spaces that provide world-class facilities to help take great new ideas from concept and testing stages out to market, offering an inspiration to all association planners worldwide.

Adelaide Convention Centre Fast Facts

- 3 distinct but fully integrated buildings
- A total capacity of 20,000 sqm of multi-purpose space
- 27 individual meeting rooms
- Capacity of main Plenary Hall: 3,000 / 15 possible configurations
- Panoramic Ballroom as a signature venue
- 3,500 hotel rooms within a 5-minute walk / 6,000 within the wider CBD

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Rotterdam

Beating Heart of Holland's Medical Sector

A young and dynamic city that is constantly evolving, Rotterdam might not be the first name that comes to mind when choosing a conference destination in Holland—but it soon will be. Skyscrapers, an impressive port, famous museums, hip restaurants and food markets are the result of the can-do mentality of the people of Rotterdam. What is perhaps lesser known is that Rotterdam is increasingly contributing to the development of life sciences and health worldwide, drawing the attention of European and international associations to the city with exciting new discoveries in these fascinating sectors.

WORDS RÉMI DÉVÉ



Home to the largest port in Europe and ninth-largest in the world, Rotterdam is often regarded as the industrial powerhouse of Holland. Yet, this is also a vibrant, modern city that was almost completely rebuilt after WWII. Located just 26 minutes by train from Schiphol International Airport and boasting its own international airport (Rotterdam The Hague), this buzzing metropolis on the border of the river Maas offers a wide array of convention venues and an extensive public transport network, in addition to a breathtaking skyline. The fact that the city is home to more than 170 nationalities also helps create an open and cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Beyond its awe-inspiring architecture, its creative spirit and its port, Rotterdam is a frontrunner in the life sciences and health sector. The success of the aptly-named Medical Delta, which the city belongs to, alongside Delft and Leiden, is testament to this. An impressive cluster of world-renowned institutions (the largest in the Netherlands when it comes to life sciences), the Medical Delta combines the strengths of three leading universities, two teaching hospitals and three incubators, proving the region of West Holland is fertile ground for innovative entrepreneurship, as well as an excellent pool of talent.

Innovative Health Hub

Rotterdam's contribution to the life sciences and health sector includes top medical facilities and knowledge centres such as Erasmus MC, which excels in various research fields with a focus on fundamental and clinical domains, as well as public health and prevention. As one of the ten best medical institutes in Europe, Erasmus MC focuses on acute and complex care, relying heavily on specialist knowledge, innovation of care and prevention. Those tasks are directly linked to research in which fundamental, translational and clinical research are represented, resulting in quality improvement and more efficient patient care.

Together with the Erasmus Centre for Entrepreneurship (ECE), LIFE Rotterdam Consortium and the Municipality of Rotterdam, Erasmus MC was at the heart of the initiative of the Life Sciences & Health Hub launched last year. A true living lab, the Hub offers entrepreneurs, scientists and health-care institutions the opportunity to find each other, develop new life sciences and health innovations, and experience and test these practices with patients and clients. It is perfectly in line with the Technology Transfer Office of the Erasmus MC, which is all about the valorisation of knowledge and the application of science to medical practice and commercial innovation.

Rotterdam in a nutshell

- 630,000 inhabitants
- Second largest city in the Netherlands
- Europe's largest port
- Capacity of largest auditorium: 10,500 pax
- New Rotterdam Ahoy Convention Centre (RACC) slated for 2020, with largest auditorium in the Netherlands
- More than 8,000 hotel rooms in the greater Rotterdam area
- Home to an international airport / Schiphol International Airport located only 26 minutes by train

Thijs Spigt, director of the Technology Transfer Office at Erasmus MC, puts it like this: *"The Hub supports mainly scientists, but also employees in the medical sector—like nurses for instance— who have an innovative idea. Ideas can range from a new medicine to a 'car-wash' for hospital beds. We help protect knowledge, look for cooperation partners, and find the right funding to launch a product to the market or bring it to patients' homes. One of those ways is by starting a new venture; these startups are facilitated in the incubator and are now also in the new Life Sciences & Health Hub."*

"The Life Sciences & Health Hub comes to life with programmes such as 'Get Started', one in which early-stage entrepreneurs with ideas in the life sciences area are supported to turn their ideas into an actual business and scale it. Startups, as well as established SME companies, are involved with programmes in the Hub", adds Martin Luxemburg, director of the Erasmus Centre for Entrepreneurship.

The Life Sciences & Health Hub is located within Rotterdam Science Tower, a multi-company building combining lab space, offices and facilities for laboratory education. The Tower also houses LabHotel, a concept that allows researchers and

companies to make use of laboratory facilities, and, further in the south of the city, on the premises of the Maasstad Hospital, there is the 'Zorgboulevard', a one-stop location for all aspects of health and wellbeing.

Altogether, according to recent research, more than 150 life sciences and health companies are located in and around Rotterdam, making the life sciences and health sector one of the main employers of the city, as well as one of its most important economic sectors.

Generation R Next

Rotterdam's dynamism can be witnessed in various fields of endeavours. Paediatrics is one of them, where many important and long-term studies are conducted. A prime example is the Generation R Study, a prospective cohort study from foetal life until young adulthood in a multi-ethnic urban population.

Vincent Jaddoe, Professor Paediatric Epidemiology and Paediatrician at Erasmus MC, works at the Sophia Children's Hospital and led the bid for the 2017 World Congress on Developmental Origins of Health and Disease, which took place at De Doelen International Congress Centre in 2017. He explains: *"The Generation R study is designed to identify early environmental and genetic causes of normal and abnormal growth, development and health from foetal life until young adulthood. Eventually, the results from the study will contribute to the development of strategies for optimising health and healthcare for children and pregnant women. In the Generation R Next, we go one step further and study the health and lifestyle of a mother-to-be before pregnancy and the effects on the growth and development of her child."*

Erasmus MC conducts over 80 projects funded by the European Commission, 70 of which are Horizon 2020 projects and include collaborations with partners from 56 countries. Professor Jaddoe states: *"Bibliometric indicators place Erasmus MC in the top of clinical medicine worldwide. In addition to scientific research, patient care and education are core tasks of the centre. It is the top referral institution for a region of about five million inhabitants, as well as one of the largest medical schools in the Netherlands, with around 3,500 medical students and 258 PhD graduates in 2016. Together, the students and 13,000 employees at Erasmus MC improve the individual patient care and public health of tomorrow, which says a lot about the kind of knowledge to be found in Rotterdam!"*

Type 1 Diabetes

Another area of excellence in Rotterdam is diabetes research, particularly treating children affected by this disease. For example, Diabeter, a specialised treatment centre for type 1 diabetes in kids and young adults, is the largest institution of this scale in the European Union.

Dr. H.J. Veeze, Paediatrician and Diabetologist, explains: *"The care for children and young adults with type 1 diabetes deserves a specialised treatment centre with a complete focus*



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on type 1 diabetes. It is this focus that enables us to provide optimal care for young people who grow up with this chronic disease. Diabeter does not only provide care, it also plays an active role in making this care better. We do this by participating in scientific research that is aimed at giving the target group a life without diabetes complications. In the end, this must lead to a definitive cure for type 1 diabetes."

In the centre, all staff—including nurses, interns, paediatricians, dieticians, and psychologists—focus on this care, and on this care only. "When your 'flight hours' are more focused, you get more experienced; deliver safer care; and act far more cost efficiently. This is reflected in the best outcome that will impact people globally, a very low hospital admission rate and, for the patients, greater value for money in the short term, as well as in the long run, since the risk of amputations, blindness, kidney failure and more are reduced drastically," Dr. Veeze adds. It hardly comes as a surprise, then, that Diabeter received the Value Based Health Care Prize from Michael Porter from Harvard University in 2017.

Praising the value of Rotterdam as a centre of excellence – thus the perfect location for life sciences-related conferences – Dr. Veeze says Rotterdam has adjectives like "innovative" and "cutting-edge" written all over it. "Rotterdam has

"Rotterdam was a natural choice for our next international ICHOM conference in May 2019. The Netherlands is a leading light in the adoption of value-based healthcare and Rotterdam is the home of Erasmus Medical Center, our first strategic alliance partner. We look forward to welcoming our global community to Rotterdam and working with Erasmus MC and the convention bureau to showcase the progress made worldwide to provide better value for patients, as well as how we can continue to support our network in implementing and measuring outcomes."

Christina Rångemark Åkerman, President of the International Consortium for Health Outcomes Measurement (ICHOM).

the culture and the right attitude to act in a pioneering manner. It's the kind of place where things change constantly for the better, where innovation has room to grow. I personally believe it's an ideal destination for conferences with the Schiphol International Airport and Rotterdam The Hague Airport being so close, as well as with the city's excellent meeting infrastructure," he says.

Dr. Veeze is not the only one with this mindset. In recent years, Rotterdam has indeed increasingly been selected as the host city for important international congresses related to health and life sciences. In 2018, a number of paediatric conferences will be held in Rotterdam. Furthermore this year several organisations chose Rotterdam to be the host city for their congresses, including the European Society for Paediatric Infectious Diseases (ESPID, 2020) and the European Society for Paediatric Anaesthesiology (ESPA, 2019), while several more bids for other congresses are underway. As Rotterdam continues to make discoveries that will be valuable all across the world, it's only natural that the world would want to meet there.

More information

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Monaco

A Progressive Principality

Nestled along the French Riviera near the border town of Menton, the principality of Monaco can easily be considered a modern-day Cinderella story, where princes and princesses still don sashes and gowns to dance at star-studded balls. The only difference between the city-state's galas and those of the popular fairy tale are that in Monaco, events revolve around one of the principality's thriving knowledge sectors. Sure, it would be easy to write off Monaco as a glittering locale devoted to mega yachts and flashy sports cars, but the principality is emerging as a champion in fields like finance, medical, IT, sustainability and innovation—and has the infrastructure and meeting success to prove it.

WORDS LANE NIESET



In Monaco, size is everything. Measuring less than 2 square kilometres, the principality ranks second-smallest country in the world after Vatican City, yet it boasts the second-most tourist arrivals per capita. Not only is it considered one of the safest and most politically stable countries on the globe, it's also one of the most cosmopolitan, with over 5,000 businesses and a population consisting of 120 different nationalities.

While the principality thrives on tourism, attracting nearly 43,000 day trippers alone, it's also developing into one of Europe's most attractive association destinations. Located just 30 minutes from the Nice Côte d'Azur Airport, which offers over 100 international flights, Monaco is a convenient location for delegates coming from all corners of the continent. Its European-style resorts (boasting over 2,500 rooms) are some of the best in the world (just one glance at the iconic, 150-year-old Hôtel de Paris Monte-Carlo and you'll quickly get the idea) and centrally located, just a quick stroll from the convention centre and the principality's iconic attractions like the Casino de Monte-Carlo.

Over the past five years, the Monaco Convention Bureau has honed in on three main sectors that are driving the principality's meetings activity: IT, healthcare, and finance and consulting. Not only is Monaco attracting 500 events and 40 association congresses per year, it's also developing a rich landscape of start-ups and knowledge hubs, where sectors like financial services are some of the largest in the world.

Changed perception

After the 2009 world financial crisis, Monaco's meeting industry faced an identity problem. Associations viewed the principality as a luxury locale and shied away, thinking it would be too expensive to host events there. That's when the Monaco Convention Bureau decided to create a new campaign and capitalize on its dual expertise—both as a knowledge hub and as a business destination. *"Some clients thought that Monaco was not appropriated for meetings and conventions and was too expensive. We had to fight a problem of perception that has been more difficult to overcome than a problem of price,"* explains Monaco Convention Bureau Director Sandrine Camia. *"We realised that the most important pillars of the Monegasque economy were the same as the big meetings sectors that have been coming to Monaco for a number of years."*

When the campaign was launched in 2013, the finance, medical and IT sectors accounted for 48 percent of Monaco's

business events business, but in 2017, this number jumped up to 59 percent, with a market share of five points and 6 percent increase on room nights (when compared to the previous year). This year, Monaco has set out to target the medical sector specifically, focusing on the implementation of the strengthening of codes and guidelines regulating medical congresses. With a tagline *"In Monaco, surgeons don't operate on blackjack tables,"* the principality is creating a new image, proving that its healthcare sector is just as much of a draw as its glamorous gambling.

Monaco Fast Facts

- Hosts over 500 major meetings and events per year
- About 30 minutes from the Nice Côte d'Azur Airport, which offers over 100 direct international flights
- 3,800 hotel rooms extending throughout the Principality and nearby towns, including two- and three-star offerings
- Eco-certified convention centre, the Grimaldi Forum Monaco, which measures 35,000 sqm (including 14,000 sqm of exhibition and catering space) and can host up to 3,000
- 3 auditoria of 400, 800 and 1,800 seats
- 40 meeting rooms spread across nine hotels with capacity for groups from 10 to 900

Monégasque Medicine

In a country with a population of less than 40,000, it's impressive that Monaco is home to 800 hospital beds, 530 healthcare professionals (consisting of 436 doctors and 94 paramedics), and 14 professors and rewarded specialists in fields like cardiology, medical imaging and gynaecology. Professor Nadir Saoudi, Head of the Cardiology Department at Princess Grace Hospital, has been quoted saying: *"Excellence is what Monaco does best. It may be arrogant to say it, but in every field here, excellence is everywhere. This is a non-teaching, non-university hospital with 350 beds that has five international professors at the same time—and that is extremely rare. I am not aware of any other hospital in Europe like that."*

Professor Saoudi was the first doctor in France to use magnetic navigation, an intracardiac catheter guidance system that reaches and insert probes in previously inaccessible parts of the heart. In addition to this achievement, the department was selected

as an Expert Centre for the implantation of a new type of mini pacemaker—the smallest in the world—placing Monaco on the map in terms of this kind of research and medical procedure—a major accolade, since nearly 30,000 patients each year in France require pacemaker implants.

At the Monaco Gerontology Coordination Centre, meanwhile, Professor Alain Pesce, Head of Department, introduced the idea of 50-cm tall humanoid robots to assist patients dealing with Alzheimer's disease, since there is a lack of medicine on the market to treat this condition. With the help of the Altera team, this new KODRO technology is now assisting elderly patients suffering from cognitive decline by helping them maintain social relationships. *"Robots do not judge. Patients do not have to worry about what someone else is thinking, so there is no sense of failure,"* Pesce explains. *"This very sophisticated equipment helps to draw out of their apathy those patients who are unable to rouse themselves into action. The robots can be programmed according to the patient's needs."*

Progressive Public Health

As one of the main priorities in Monaco, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs invests almost 8 percent of its state budget in public healthcare, which continues to strengthen the research and development taking place across the principality—in addition to attracting a number of congresses looking to learn and build on this legacy. For example, the Aesthetic & Anti-Aging World Congress has brought 8,000 participants every year since 2005 and the IOC World Conference on the Prevention of Injury & Illness in Sport brings as many as 1,500 participants every three years. According to a testimonial from Dr. Richard Budgett, IOC Medical Director: *"The IOC conference on injury and illness prevention is the jewel in the crown of our medical and scientific program. The Principality has a long history in association with elite sport. It is linked to the Olympic Games, with H.S.H. Prince Albert being an IOC member and with the International Association of Athletics Federations having its headquarters here. Monaco is really embedded in the world of sport and it is a gathering point for everybody. The Grimaldi Forum is well designed, and there is a feeling of spaciousness allowing people to mingle and make the connections they are really here for."*

Going Green

By 2020, Monaco plans to generate at least 20 percent of energy from green sources and drive down greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent. This environmentally conscious mentality is one that extends throughout the city, offering delegates access to everything from a clean mobility transportation system of electric cars called Mobeo to an e-bike sharing service with electric bicycles. The ISO 14001-certified Grimaldi Forum Monaco, the principality's main conference venue, also takes an active role in the principality's sustainability goals, utilising low-energy lighting for 70 percent of its lights; recycling 500 tons of waste per year; and using sea water to reduce energy consumption for air conditioning by 20 percent. Even the automotive industry is turning green. Monaco hosts six international races per year—including the famous Formula One—and now major companies like Toyota and Mercedes are looking to the iconic streets that form a makeshift racetrack as a test ground for alternative energy; hybrid and electric car model launches; and Formula-E racing.

When it comes to environmental protection, it's public knowledge that Prince Rainier III was an avid conservationist, launching the Scientific Centre of Monaco (CSM) in 1960 to provide the principality with the means to conduct oceanographic research and support governmental and international organisations working in this sector. The centre focuses on three key areas: marine biology, polar biology, and medical biology, which is home to an observatory that uses cord blood in the research of sickle cell disease treatment. Through research conducted at the centre, international teams have performed studies on marine environments like submarine seagrass meadows, which can act as a water purifier and reduce bacterial pathologies in nearby coral.



Case Study 2017 IOC World Conference

Last March, 1,200 delegates from 24 countries gathered at the Grimaldi Forum in Monaco for the fifth IOC (International Olympic Committee) World Conference on Prevention of Injury & Illness in Sport, considered the premier international conference concerning the clinical aspects of sports and exercise medicine. Throughout the three-day event, delegates had the opportunity to attend 33 symposia led by 122 invited speakers and 19 scientific committee members, who drove discussions on topics like preventing illness and injury in athletes and monitoring health to optimise sport performance through prevention.

The triennial conference has been hosted in Monaco since 2011 (and the next one is already confirmed for March 2020), bringing together recognised scientists and practitioners from the medical and sports worlds to share knowledge on ways to minimise risk factors in sports while maximising safe sports participation. *“When we push ourselves to the limit of our capabilities, health risks are inherent to the practice of sport. This is why protecting athletes’ health and preventing injuries and illnesses in training and competition are top priorities for the International Olympic Committee.”* explained IOC President and Olympian Thomas Bach in his forward. *“With Olympic Agenda 2020, we have demonstrated how strongly we are committed to putting the athletes at the heart of the Olympic Movement. This conference is another step in that goal.”*

More information

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Washington, DC

A Local Approach for a Global Impact

Brimming with marble monuments and famous politicians, Washington, DC, the US capital and the seat of its three branches of government, as well as the federal district of the US, has a long history portfolio and a government-driven way of life. Nowadays boasting a vibrant energy befitting a world-class metropolis, there is plenty to be examined on Washington, DC as an industry leading knowledge hub in key industries such as tech, biotech/pharma, education and medical.

WORDS VICKY KOFFA



According to the latest International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) Statistics Report, Washington, DC is the number one city in the USA for international association meetings. With 17 free-to-enter Smithsonian museums, historic landmarks, tech-friendly venues and artistically-appealing buildings, the city is one of the top destinations to host association meetings.

Washington, DC offers a value-added approach for conventions, especially for organisations within the technology, biotech/pharmaceutical, education and medical spaces. By gaining unrivalled access to venture capitalists, government leaders, tech start-ups and cyber security experts, you can experience the DC difference.

The one thing Washington, DC has that no other city will ever have is the federal government. Entrepreneurs and investors can learn more about regulations in their respective industries, make their voices heard on Capitol Hill and learn how to form better partnerships between their businesses and local and federal governments. With the access DC provides, association planners can provide all kinds of support to their meetings, like, maybe, nowhere else in the world.

Tech hub taken to the next level

In discussions regarding technology, terms like continuous upgrade, refinement and, of course, unparalleled innovation take over. DC's numbers in this sector are louder than words: ranked the third best tech city in the nation in Cushman & Wakefield's Tech Cities 1.0 report, DC is also the number one city for women working in the field (according to SmartAsset), and number one for high-tech employment concentration (Bureau of Labour Statistics). Even more impressive is the presence of more than one thousand tech start-ups located in the capital city.

With so many like-minded companies in the area, a large talent pool is formed attracting major companies such as Blackboard, IBM, Verizon Communications and Boeing, to name but a few. But it is the vast number of younger educated men and women entering the workforce who drive innovation. In the District's case, several schools like the Thomas Jefferson School of Science and Technology and the Heritage High School STEM Academy grant scholarships to students offering them the opportunity to dive into various technological fields. These students shape the

future of technology through fresh ideas, research and, finally, innovation. Furthermore, more than ten colleges in the area offer access to university labs and support for entrepreneurs.

In this context, Mayor Bowser has come up with a display with a goal to support DC's innovation ecosystem. During the month of 'InnoMAYtion', as they call it, interested parties share their success stories while the people in charge announce new resources, for instance, the launch in 2016 of the Project 500 with American University to provide resources for 500 local small businesses.

Intertwined medical community

Along the same lines, Washington, DC rises to the challenge as far as medical care goes. There are currently 16 medical centres and hospitals - the Children's National Medical Centre, recognised in ten children's specialties and the George Washington University Hospital famous for its technological advances in treating kidney health, for example - located in the District of Columbia, which together form the DC Hospital Association (DCHA). Most of them are nationally recognised in multiple specialties, with high numbers of surgeons flocking to the area to tap into the knowledge and facilities offered. The cluster is complemented by the presence of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the largest public funder of biomedical research in the world, offering laboratory facilities and expert research staff. To top it all off, several medical teaching schools have strong collaborations with the hospitals cultivating future innovators.

Local initiatives, such as the DC eHealth Initiative or the DC Healthy People 2020 Development Process, connect national government experts with associations and the community by improving communication between them in order to provide better and more efficient healthcare for all.

Washington's medical sector is renowned for its strong community. In fact, the District of Columbia is home to more than 180 medical associations and hosts major conferences each year, 40% of the total being in the medical field. The 2015 Healthcare Leadership Council (HLC) Innovations Expo, the annual forum for the nation's healthcare leaders, was held in Capitol Hill and was attended by 150 members of the Congress, displaying cutting edge

medical services, technologies and medicines. Likewise, the Medical Tourism Association (MTA) hosts its annual World Medical Tourism & Global Healthcare Congress in DC with over 3,000 attendees with the mission to provide connectivity between patients, healthcare providers and insurance companies.

Concentration is key to biotech growth

Life sciences, a more generic term for the biotech and pharmaceutical sector, is an important hub for any city to exploit, but Washington, DC is passionate and quite active in the sector's advancement. Whether this goal is achieved through investment, intellectual capital, local support or a combination of all of the above, the Metro DC area has managed to rank constantly among US's top life sciences clusters for the last five years according to Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), climbing to number six in 2016 from number thirteen the year before.

Venture capital funding in the region - much of which comes from government agencies such as the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency and National Institutes of Health - is a life source for biotech, especially at a later stage, providing proof of successful companies. Adding to that, public-private partnerships like the BioHealth Innovation (BHI), which serves to connect sectors, advance technologies and accelerate innovation, leading to the existence of 170 biotech companies in the region. A high concentration of high-end labs, research universities and funding agencies have attracted thousands of qualified scientists to the area, offering growth to the cluster, also known as the 'DNA Alley'.

Accessible and innovative education

From the first stages up to university level and beyond, the District of Columbia has placed education as a priority, earning its title as the most educated city in the US, according to the US Census Bureau. With 21 higher education institutions in and around the city fostering programmes like the Early Childhood Education (ECE) and the OSSE Adult and Family Education (AFE), it harbours continuous innovation in methods of learning and ensures residents get an education, making the cluster

attractive for related conferences. In fact, many education associations are based in the region profiting from the availability of numerous organisations like Equity Lab, City-bridge Foundation and National Implementation Research Network, which focus on new teaching methods.

These factors and more establish DC as a knowledge hub with access to robust assets unlike any other city, and one of the top destinations to host meetings. All in all, Washington, DC provides associations with a complete package, not only in terms of academia and industry, but also in terms of inside development within the meetings industry.

More precisely, in the context of understanding and tending to associations' needs, DC has formed partnerships that associations can benefit from. For instance, it is a member of the Global Association Hubs Partnership (GAHP), which comes as an innovative response to the increasing decentralisation of international associations as they look to develop their activities globally, connecting association clients to local meeting and events logistics as well as the regional contacts in their respective fields of expertise. Another interesting concept is the new International Business Events Council (IBEC) programme, an advisory council supporting strategic planning and business development by tapping into broader international insights from experts - Boardroom being one of them - that can assist with market development for Destination DC. Lastly, the Washington, DC Economic Partnership (WDCEP) collaborates closely with the destination sharing a target list of key industry conferences in various sectors as well as vetting the nominations for the Tech Ambassadors program.

Thriving community

Elliott Ferguson, President and CEO of Destination DC says: "DC offers associations a value-added approach with a thriving start-up community, venture capitalists and access to thought leaders, influencers and industry experts. As a leader in social entrepreneurship and innovation, we have the resources to enhance an organisation's business goals, whether it be supporting their delegate base or growing their sponsorship dollars and exhibitor footprint. Aside from DC's strong industries, new hotel inventory, special events venues and other ongoing infrastructure developments are continuously adding to our city's appeal."

Undeniably, Washington's infrastructure doesn't disappoint. The Walter E. Washington Convention Centre, located in the heart of downtown DC, is a green meeting facility

that will see capital improvements this fall with new seating, enhanced digital signage and a streetscape plan. Furthermore, the city boasts 19 new hotels in the pipeline, all close to the Convention Centre, with many new and renovated special events venues in the works over the next two years. The ease of travel continues to add to DC's appeal for international business travellers as the city recently launched direct nonstop air service into Dulles International Airport from key international markets. There are 78 daily international arrivals into Dulles International Airport, and new nonstop air service includes El Salvador via Volaris, Edinburgh, Scotland via United Airlines, London Stansted Airport via Primera Air and Hong Kong on Cathay Pacific.

The results are evident; associations appreciate the fact that DC goes the extra mile. Sanjay Raman, on behalf of the Institute of Electrical & Electronic Engineers (IEEE), says: "DC provides direct access to our government clients and commercial customer base. Our meeting is part technical and part exhibit, so it was important to have the proximity to our industry base. When you add in Washington, DC's natural appeal of free things to do, outstanding restaurants and its state-of-the-art convention centre, there was no question about selecting DC for the IEEE International Microwave Symposium." Lauren Parr, Vice President, Meetings at American Geophysical Union, reinforces that opinion: "Washington, DC, provides a terrific opportunity for families to enjoy all that the city has to offer and for earth and space scientists to connect with not only their disciplinary communities at the meeting, but also the larger global science policy community located in the DC region."

Washington DC Fast Facts

- Approx. 137 hotels with 32,594 rooms
- Convention Centre for up to 42,000 attendees; total space of over 200,000 sqm / 65,300 sqm of exhibition space / 77 meeting rooms
- 3 DC-area airports: Ronald Reagan National Airport (DCA), Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD) and Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI)

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CICG

CENTRE INTERNATIONAL
DE CONFÉRENCES

Geneva Health Forum A Platform for Dialogue

Organised every two years since 2006, the Geneva Health Forum (GHF) was created by the Geneva University Hospitals and the Faculty of Medicine of Geneva University. Held at the International Conference Center of Geneva (CICG), it has become, in a decade, the flagship event for global health. Working on the Steering Committee, Nicole Rosset, Deputy Director, External Affairs Directorate, Geneva University Hospitals, explains why Geneva can be considered the Global Health Capital and what makes it - together with the CICG - a great conference destination.

Words Rémi Dévé

Every other year in the spring, the Geneva Health Forum (GHF) combines plenary and parallel sessions and attracts hundreds of participants, with a large international exhibition area. Geneva University Hospitals, along with the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Geneva and Swiss and international institutions active in the field of health have joined their talents and resources to organise the Forum. Nicole Rosset explains: *"The success of the Geneva Health Forum is primarily based on its original format. Through interactive approaches, the GHF aims to create a space for dialogue between professionals in the field of health services, policy makers, academics, the media, civil society and the private sector. As the cradle of international dialogue and the global capital of health policies, Geneva provides a strategic location to do so."*

The Lake Geneva region, often described as the 'Health Valley', presents a unique concentration of healthcare and academic institutions, and is blossoming with many innovative biotech, medtech, and engineering start-ups, as well as larger companies in the health sector. Nicole Rosset even calls it a 'unique ecosystem': *"In Geneva, there are international organisations with a global health agenda - WHO, UNAIDS or UNITAIDS just to name a few - NGOs like Doctors Without Borders, permanent missions to the UN of more than 140 countries, private public partnerships working on research to eradicate AIDS or malaria, philanthropic foundations... where else would it make sense to debate over and make health policy decisions on a global scale?"*

And not only does Geneva provide the software so that the world can meet in ideal conditions, but the hardware is also a draw. Geneva's location in the heart of Europe, its stability on an economic, political and social level, its easiness of access both by plane and train make it an association's favorite. *"I would add the beauty of its landscape of course,"* says Nicole Rosset *"but also its human size, which makes it easy to navigate. In terms of conference infrastructure, besides the abundant accommodation options, you can hardly beat the CICG, a multi-purpose, very flexible facility which meets all the requirements you can expect from such a venue. The teams working there are both very friendly and professional, and they can show great adaptability when necessary."*

In this regard, conferences like the Geneva Health Forum are instrumental in profiling Geneva on the world scene. *"That's one of the definite impacts of the Forum actually,"* Nicole Rosset concludes. *"It positions a small metropolis like Geneva like a global village."*

More information

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Maastricht A Complete Value Creation Chain

Maastricht, at the southernmost tip of the Netherlands, is not only the capital of the province of Limburg but also the de facto capital of the Meuse-Rhine Euregion, a cross-border area with a diversity of cultures and approximately 4 million inhabitants. As one of the oldest cities in the Netherlands, it is particularly well known as a centre for science, art and culture, as reflected in the presence of various international institutions, museums and local associations. But the strength of the city lies mostly in the four rapidly growing Brightlands campuses and the Maastricht University combining innovation, support and growth.

Words Vicky Koffa



PROF. DR. MR. RIANNE LETSCHERT DURING THE TRANSFER OF THE RECTORATE
© HARRY HEUTS

HEALTHY ECOSYSTEM

Covering fields like science, business and education in materials, health, food and smart services, the four campuses - the Chemelot Campus, the Campus Greenport Venlo, the Smart Services Campus and the Brightlands Maastricht Health Campus - work hand in hand with the Maastricht University as well as the government to form a unique ecosystem where innovative start-ups can find a home.

Prof. dr. Rianne Letschert, Rector of Maastricht University, explained the benefits medical associations might find in the area: *“The co-operation between governmental, institutional and commercial organisations and four Brightlands campuses has created a phenomenal ‘ecosystem’ of business and knowledge exchange with a global character. The university alone offers education to more than 50% of foreign students, and employs researchers and lecturers from all over the world. Maastricht University hosts 112 nationalities! This dynamic environment provides enough opportunities for international associations and commercial organisations to tap into. International conferences are known to be great platforms for establishing new and challenging connections, and provide an ideal environment to broaden relationships and expand international cooperation. An interesting element of Brightlands Campuses is that they contain the ideal ecosystem for start-ups; companies of the future.”*

Taking a closer look, the Brightlands Maastricht Health Campus can offer a complete value creation chain using the knowledge gained from research to realise proof of market value, or even market introduction. The disciplines covered vary from molecular genetics, toxicology and neurosciences to human kinetics, epidemiology, health care sciences, and social medicine with priority given to research that involves the use of imaging and cardiovascular-related technologies. Groundbreaking health research, for example the creation in the laboratory

of embryo-like structures from mouse stem cells, is the result of close partnerships between the Maastricht University Medical Centre’s (MUMC+) knowledge and the research opportunities the Health Campus offers. Topped with valorisation and eventually commercial opportunities for innovative ideas, the area becomes very interesting for hosting any type of international medical conferences.

NURTURING KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Prof. dr. Rianne Letschert recognises the interrelated connection between the notion of associations and education. She thinks that *“associations are communities formed with a purpose, and an integral part of such a community is knowledge exchange. I always say; on your own you might move faster, but together, you can achieve greater things. This especially applies to science these days. International collaborations, based on personal contacts between researchers, or facilitated through contacts within associations, are of the greatest importance to achieving new knowledge that will help our society solve big issues. No matter the size of such communities, their purpose will drive the need for education. As such, it is clear that associations are natural domains for education.”*

Taking her thoughts further, international conferences held by associations can potentially alter the life of a community such as Maastricht, serving as a platform for inspiring and challenging breakthroughs. *“The impact of conferences on Maastricht - or on any other destination - is huge in many different ways. Of course, the obvious economic spin-off, which drives relevant political decisions, while that same spin-off supports the diversity of entrepreneurship and innovation within the city. On an academic level you will see a legacy that is built on new initiatives in research and applications, and overall on strengthening or establishing important relationships with peers. Such activity creates a natural attraction for commercial*

organisations, which see opportunities to do business in such a vibrant environment. In other words, international conferences form a crucial part in the development of a city.”

MECC MAASTRICHT'S CONTRIBUTION

Having already been selected for various medical conferences like the International Congress of European Microbiologists in 2015 with 2,500 delegates and the annual meeting of the European Atherosclerosis Society next year, the Maastricht Exhibition & Congress Centre (MECC) finds itself in the heart of this vibrant environment, both in terms of distance and close collaboration with the Maastricht University and the Brightlands campuses. Dr. Letschert describes the synergies which have formed over the years: *“As a university, we benefit from MECC’s friendly environment and professionalism. Besides research presentations, we organised master fairs in MECC. At these fairs bachelor students can meet with more than 60 master programmes. Furthermore, Maastricht University uses MECC for large-scale exams, since the facilities are ideal for such big events and the staff is very proactive to their clients’ needs.”*

Currently, the Centre is undergoing extensive renovation and expansion to be completed by 2020 in order to make the venue not only more attractive, but also an even better fit with the local development of the health-related environment around it. Major conferences are already in the Centre’s agenda for the future, namely the International Society for Paediatric Dentistry and the European Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, both of which are scheduled for 2021, both with over 2,000 expected attendees.

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Brussels' Brain for Excellence

Globally, Belgium, a recognised centre of excellence, ranks in the top five countries for healthcare quality. Over 150 international and Belgian pharma and biotech firms have positioned themselves both in and around the Brussels area. Research facilities and qualified multilingual personnel are one major incentive, in addition to the Brussels Airport being a key pharma distribution hub. The

Brussels region is also home to an expansive—and booming—healthcare infrastructure, complete with 23 hospitals. Among the many specialties Brussels and its surroundings have become renowned for is neurosurgery, making the Belgian capital the perfect place to host the 18th European Congress of Neurosurgery in October.

Words Rémi Dévé



Neurosurgery is carried out on patients with diseases of the brain, spinal cord, nerves and their coverings (meninges and bones), which can be treated by surgical procedures. It covers a vast area, ranging from brain tumours to herniated discs. The very first neurosurgical department, separate from general surgery, was set up by Professor Paul Martin – now regarded as the promoter of this speciality in Belgium – in Brussels in 1948 at the Jules Bordet Institute, part of the Université Libre de Bruxelles. Since then, Brussels has established several neurosurgery departments in academic and non-academic hospitals, offering advanced technologies and providing patients with a high-level quality of care.

CYBERKNIFE

Throughout history, many Belgian academics, professors and scientists were instrumental in increasing global attention on Brussels. In 'History and Development of Neurosurgery in Belgium,' Jacques Brotchi, who created the Neurosurgery Department at the Erasme Hospital, part of the Université Libre de Bruxelles, explains: *“Paul Martin and Jean Brihaye, assisted closely by Luc Calliauw and Joel Bonnal (all Belgian citizens), introduced modern neurosurgery in many topics like longitudinal sinus grafting in parasagittal and skull base meningiomas (tumours forming on membranes over the brain and spinal cord). Bonnal deserves special recognition not only for his technical successes, but also for his clinical neurosurgery skills at a time when new machines like CT scans, MRIs, and PET scans were slowly arriving on the market. In Belgium, there are now more than 20 PET scans for a population of 11 million inhabitants, as well as a number of high-level papers published in peer-reviewed journals.”*

Today, work carried out at neurosurgery departments in places like Brussels' Erasme hospital is making an impact globally. Since debuting, the hospital's Neurosurgery Department has been recognised for its excellence in the fields of the central nervous system and the spine. In 1998, the department was designated as the *“world's leading reference centre for research and training in neurosurgery”* by the World Health Organization. In the field of brain tumours, Erasme's multidisciplinary team has an integrated approach, supported by imaging services and a pathology laboratory. Erasme specialises in an accurate diagnostic approach to provide patients with a wide variety of treatment options, from the classical surgical approach to Gamma Knife and Cyberknife (a robotic radiosurgery system used to treat tumours), as well as non-invasive brain imaging technique magnetoencephalography –which are all now part of everyday practice.

Belgian neurosurgery experts have also presided over several international societies, including the European Association of Neurosurgical Societies (EANS) in 1979; the French Speaking Society of Neurosurgery in 1992 and 2012; and the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies in 2005. Today, there are around 140 neurosurgeons in Belgium performing excellent practice with international recognition.

YOUNG GENERATION

The young generation, led by Professor Michael Bruneau of the Erasme hospital, recently succeeded in winning EANS2018, the 18th European Congress of Neurosurgery, which will be held at SQUARE Brussels Convention Centre in October. Heralding

the theme *“Facts, Fiction and Future,”* it will bring together around 1,500 experts in their fields and highlight best current practices in all subspecialties of neurosurgery, while also looking at future developments and innovative perspectives. Through a combination of interactive pre-congress courses, plenary sessions and high-level discussion platforms, EANS2018 is set to be a major scientific event.

Professor Michael Bruneau, who also serves as congress president, explains: *“Brussels has many assets when it comes to organising a conference. First of all, being in the heart of Europe, our capital can easily be reached by various means of transport. The congress centre is also truly exceptional, with a much-needed modular capacity. It is located in the very heart of the capital, in the immediate vicinity of the magnificent Grand-Place and the city's cultural sites. The hotel offering is diverse and everyone can find the price range they want. The art of living in Brussels is not a myth and can be discovered through many activities.”*

When asked about the value that conferences like EANS2018 can bring, Professor Michael Bruneau concludes: *“Large conferences, thanks to the many participants they attract, stimulate the economic life of the capital. They contribute to the international influence of our capital and to the dissemination of the values and the knowledge of our country throughout the world. And when it comes to neurosurgery and our excellence in the field, we have a whole lot of things to share.”*

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Cape Town Turns Water Crisis Into Legacy

Cape Town is fighting the worst drought in recorded history, but leveraged the opportunity to position itself as a leader in innovation and resilience in the field of water management to attract new conferences.

Words Samantha Shankman



Cape Town's worst drought in recorded history was feared to spell disaster for the city's tourism economy as photos of water lines and doomsday headlines started appearing on news broadcasts around the world.

As the top ranked city in Africa for business tourism events by the International Congress and Convention Association, Cape Town relies on conferences not only for the visitor boost but to attract investors. Rather than scare conferences away, however, the crisis became an opportunity to become a knowledge leader and global champion in an under-recognised but growing field.

In addition to the Young Water Professionals Conference held in December 2017, Cape Town will host three water-related conferences in 2018 including the International Water Association's 2018 Water Loss Conference held in early May. It was the first IWA conference to be held in Africa and seen as an opportunity to highlight best practices from across the continent.

"One of the criteria for selection is how appealing and relevant a destination is for water professionals from a professional development and learning perspective," explains Kirsten de Vette,

Learning and Capacity Development officer, IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition. *"In Cape Town's case, the drought provided attendees an opportunity to learn first hand about the response of the city to such a severe crisis."*

The Cape Town International Convention Centre proactively prepared for the worsening drought conditions, reducing its annual water consumption by 8 million liters over the last 6 years, and recording a 42-percent savings in water consumption between the first quarter of 2017 and 2018. CTICC chief executive Julie-May Ellingson wrote all clients in early 2018 alerting them of the centre's efforts to reduce water usage and the learning opportunity at hand.

Water professionals are aligning themselves with Cape Town to spark further opportunities for the sector as a whole. *"Cape Town's drought crisis has provided an opportunity to elevate the relevance and importance of an event such as the WISA biennial conference, given the organisation is the largest professional membership body for representatives within the water sector,"* explains Jason Mingo, Chief Scientific committee member at Water Institute of Southern Africa.

WISA has been instrumental in driving the International Water Association – Water Loss Conference 2018 & their own Biennial Conference and Exhibition 2018 to Cape Town. The biennial event aims to be water neutral, offsetting the water footprint of almost 1,000 expected delegates.

Information sharing is at the crux of Cape Town's growing knowledge hub, explains Corne Koch, Head of the Cape Town and Western Cape Convention Bureau, who takes a holistic approach to hub building.

"Even before the water crisis became a huge challenge, conferences identified opportunities to build a legacy in the destination. The bureau drives discussion about knowledge sharing and building legacy with conference planners," said Koch. *"Conferences promote and support other business sectors, providing direct and indirect opportunities, to spread knowledge. This creates additional opportunities to attract other meetings and conferences."*

The water adjacent International Conference on Sanitation, Waste and Water will be hosted in Cape Town in November, and is not likely to be the last of Cape Town's growing water-related lineup.

Vancouver A Sustainable Pioneer

Throughout its young history, Vancouver has made the news as an environmental activist. Two examples speak for themselves: in 1971 Greenpeace was founded there, and in 1990 the city became the first one in North America to address climate change when it published its 'Clouds of Change report' aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Nowadays, Vancouver constantly ranks one of the most sustainable cities in the world, thanks to a series of initiatives in all green areas – whether environmental, social or ethical.

Words Rémi Dévé



Say the word Vancouver and immediately images of pristine coastline, friendly inhabitants and innovative economy will conjure up in most people's minds. It's been indeed a few years now that the city has become known for its pioneering spirit. But there's perhaps no better example to illustrate Vancouver's reputation as a forward-looking and sustainable city than the success story that is the Green Economy.

AMBITIOUS PLAN

A strategy for staying on the leading edge of urban sustainability, its official 'Greenest City Action Plan' has definitely proved successful. Perhaps unlike any other city in the world, Vancouver indeed recognised from the start that for such a plan to become reality all players of civil society had to be involved. In this context, Vancouver made sure to secure multiple stakeholder buy-in to the successful development and implementation of sustainability policies. To this day, the Council, residents, businesses, other organisations, and all levels of government still work hand-in-hand, in the most disciplined kind of way, to make their sustainable dreams come true.

Sadhu Johnston, Vancouver City Manager, puts it like this: *"Our journey to be the greenest city in the world has really been ambitious. We have succeeded in preserving our connection to nature, while our very diverse communities work together every day to make Vancouver the most environment-friendly city it can be. Of course, we still have to overcome some challenges, starting with the price of housing for instance, but I truly believe we're leading the way."*

The Greenest City Action Plan established 10 goals to be achieved by 2020, including – the list is not exhaustive – increasing green jobs and the number of companies actively engaged in greening their operations; reducing community-based greenhouse gas emissions; and increasing the number of green buildings. In the latter case, the Vancouver Convention Centre (pictured) might well be the epitome of this green drive.

GREEN ROOF

The world's first double LEED Platinum Convention Centre (LEED being one of the most popular green building certification programmes used worldwide), the massive but well-designed building was built on the waterfront in 1987, and its expansion in 2009, with groundbreaking in 2004 – its architecture is meant to respect the overall ecology of the site. In this regard, there is a 450m 'habitat skirt' at its base that encouraged the re-establishment of marine life along this formerly industrial water edge! What is also striking is that the lobby areas and other foyer spaces are located on the exterior faces of the Centre, most of them providing expansive views of the harbour and mountains. Quite rare for this type of building is also the fact that special function spaces such as the first-floor ballroom, and the 1,000m² of third-floor meeting rooms have access to daylight, while operable windows in some pre-function area provide natural ventilation.

But the most iconic feature of Vancouver Convention Centre is definitely its roof – on which I was lucky enough to take a stroll. The largest, non-industrial and perhaps most sophisticated in Canada (and the world), it's a vegetated roof replicating the plant species of coastal nature to create a habitat for birds and honey bees, which also incorporates runnels or waterways to ensure even distribution of irrigation water. Speaking of water, there is a black water treatment facility that manages the black and grey water and re-uses it to irrigate the green roof and for toilet flushing. Along with use of water-conserving fixtures, the water savings add up to 72% relative to a reference building.

Claire Smith, Vice-President, Sales & Marketing at the Centre, says: *"We're very proud of our double LEED-Platinum status. We're actually the only facility of this kind in the world. As the winner of multiple architectural and design, environmental, and meeting venue awards, our sense innovation grounds and inspires our clients to take their ongoing conversation to the next level."*

SUSTAINABLE BRANDS

It comes hardly as a surprise that the Sustainable Brands conference took place there early June. Launched in 2006, the event has become a global learning, collaboration, and commerce community of forward-thinking business and brand strategy, marketing, innovation and sustainability professionals who are leading the way to a better future. Recognising that brands today have a unique role to play in both focusing corporate energy and also influencing culture, it shines a light on environmental and social purpose as tool to build stronger, more successful brands. The aim? Helping to shift the world to a sustainable economy by helping brands embed purpose-driven environmental and social innovation into the DNA of their business so that sustainability becomes a core driver of business and brand value.

"In Vancouver, conversations revolved around the theme 'Redesigning the Good Life'", explains KoAnn Vikoren Skrzyniarz, CEO and Founder of Sustainable Brands. "Vancouver is a prime example of sustainability-focused city planning, leading the way forward with the smallest carbon footprint of any North American city and a forward-thinking action plan to become the greenest city in the world by 2020. With its culture of innovation and pristine environment of surrounding sea and mountain landscapes, Vancouver provides a refreshing and inspiring backdrop for brands to discuss the designs necessary to deliver true social and environmental value to their customers."

More info

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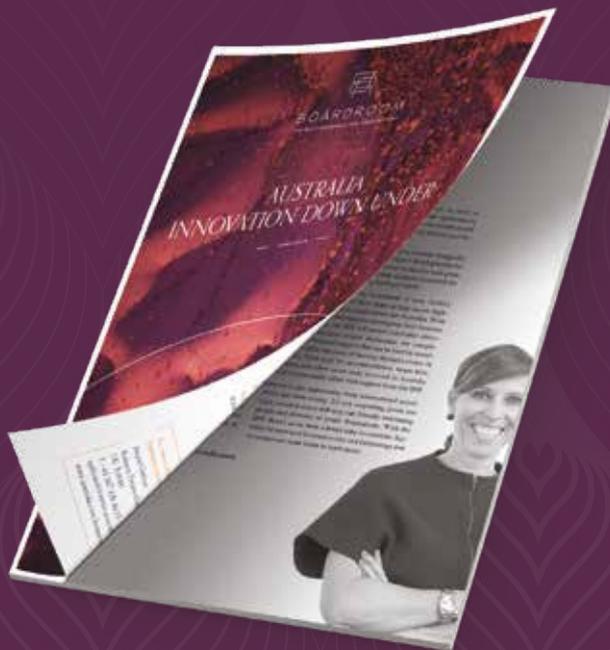
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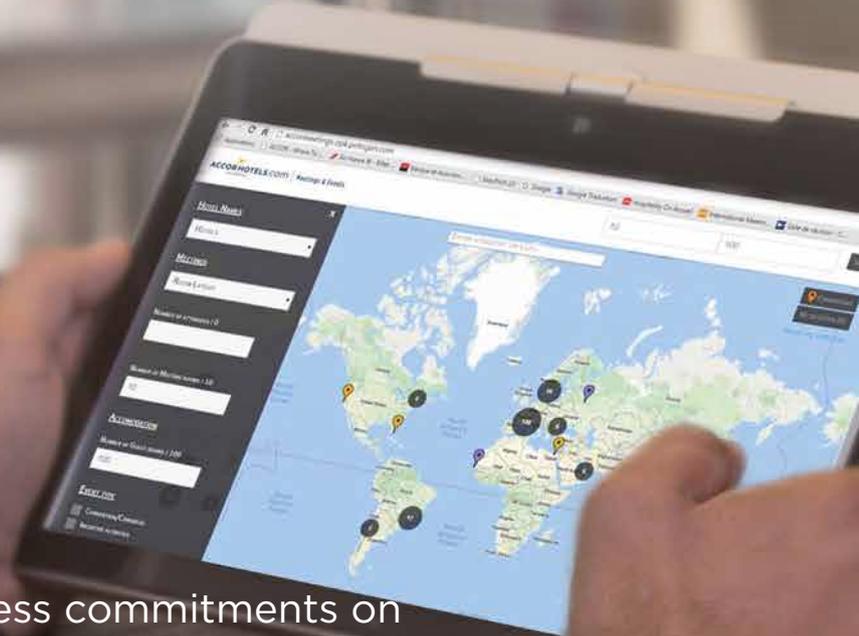


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