



BOARDROOM
THE BEST RESOURCE FOR ASSOCIATIONS

THE FRENCH CONNECTION

— FEBRUARY 2024 —

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BOARDROOM
THE BEST RESOURCE FOR ASSOCIATIONS

Boardroom \ The Best Resource for Associations

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Foreword

2024 will be a year of major events for France.

Over the next twelve months, the country will be hosting a number of large-scale sporting, commemorative, cultural and diplomatic events.

Starting with the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, which will have a strong environmental focus and build a legacy for future generations.

Throughout the rest of the year, further landmark events will be organised and celebrated in France, including the Francophonie summit, the 150th anniversary of Impressionism, the 80th anniversary of the Normandy landings, and the reopening of Notre Dame de Paris at the end of 2024.

Sustainable tourism is at the heart of Atout France's strategy, with the ambition to become a leading destination by 2030 in terms of environment, soft mobility, slow tourism as well as respect of local communities, cultural and natural heritage.

This strategy also extends to the business events sector, where the various French regions and main French cities are developing a unique and dynamic model for hosting large, medium and small events while respecting the environment and local communities.

Discover how to deliver successful events The French way, and what Destination France has to offer, including new venues and services.

Welcome to a daring, unexpected, innovative and outstanding France.

We look forward to meeting you in France and hosting your event.

Best regards

Caroline Leboucher,
CEO of Atout France,
the France Tourism Development Agency

Choose France™ 

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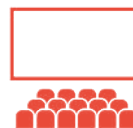
100
restaurants



240 meeting and
seminar rooms
Team building



Amphitheatre for
up to 400 people



Accessible by train
and plane

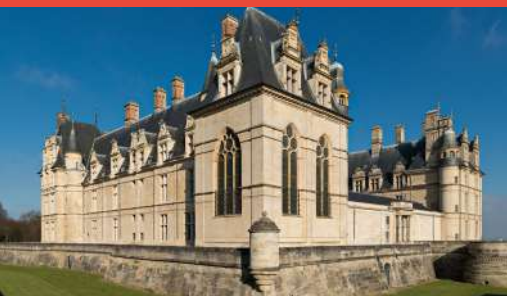


FREE SUPPORT & ADVICE IN THE REGION

Contact our Business Tourism Manager, Tariana Carvalho, to discuss your event project and discover the spaces and services best suited to your needs.




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Introducing the Thriving Hub of Grand Roissy

In the heart of the bustling international landscape, Grand Roissy emerges as an enticing destination for association conferences and events. Representing a cluster of five vibrant municipalities around the renowned Paris Charles de Gaulle International Airport—Roissy-en-France, Le Mesnil-Amelot, Gressy, Écouen, and Luzarches—this territory offers a compelling array of attractions and resources that make it an ideal choice for hosting gatherings of all kinds, far from the clichéd hustle of big cities.

Grand Roissy's biggest allure is its exceptional connectivity. The presence of an international airport, coupled with a conveniently located TGV train station within the airport, ensures attendees can swiftly transition from arrival to their meeting venue or hotel room within minutes. Daily hi-speed train services from various French cities and neighboring Belgium make it effortlessly accessible for participants traveling from near and far.

One of Grand Roissy's standout features is also its accommodation options, boasting 8,700 rooms. What sets these lodgings apart is their unwavering commitment to quality without the daunting price tags typically associated with international destinations. This affordability ensures a comfortable stay without breaking the bank.

With over 240 meeting and seminar rooms capable of accommodating up to 500 people theater-style, Grand Roissy offers a plethora of event spaces to cater to diverse needs. For those seeking distinctive event venues, the region presents

a diverse selection of remarkable and surprising locations perfect for luncheons, cocktail receptions, or gala evenings. Among them let's mention Roissy International Golf Course and its 2,700-sqm clubhouse or the Château d'Ecouen which can welcome up to 800 guests.

Beyond its conference capabilities, this destination serves as a gateway to a plethora of tourist attractions within a 50-kilometer radius. From the historic Château de Chantilly to the exhilarating Parc Astérix, from Disneyland Paris and the tranquil Abbaye de Royaumont, there's a wealth of pre- and post-conference excursion opportunities.

Additionally, Grand Roissy, with its historical significance, offers a remarkable cultural heritage that includes castles, manors, abbeys, Gothic churches, cobbled streets, and museums, providing a genuine sense of place and heritage to enrich your events. And, of course, the vibrant city of Paris itself is a mere stone's throw away, situated less than 25 kilometers distant!

And you won't have to do this alone. The Grand Roissy Tourism Office is committed to assisting associations in organizing their conferences. This support includes building candidacy files, presenting the region, offering competitive proposals, and even participating in candidate presentation meetings. Furthermore, the office aids in arranging inspection visits, planning tour itineraries, and coordinating appointments with local venues and service providers relevant to the association's needs.

In essence, Grand Roissy emerges as a distinctive destination where accessibility, affordability, and authenticity converge to create an enticing backdrop for association conferences.

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Make ideas grow

Lyon is one of France's fastest changing cities: green, bold, humanistic... Lyon is the place where new ideas grow fast. We have some of the best chefs, hotels, artists, talents and know-how in the world. We are all ready to host your future events.

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LYON
EVENTS

CENTRE DE CONGRÈS
DE LYON

Lyon's Sustainable Efforts Gain Momentum

Lyon has been making significant strides in the realm of sustainability, particularly in the organization of eco-friendly conferences within the city. The efforts involve extensive collaboration and support across the whole stakeholders' chain, making it, *in fine*, very easy for association planners to reduce their impact on the environment.

Lyon's remarkable commitment to sustainability has earned it a prominent position on the global stage. Last year, Lyon ranked second in France in (and 13th globally) in the prestigious Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS), a pioneering program designed to assess and benchmark the sustainability strategies and performance of cities as conference destinations.

This achievement hardly comes as a surprise when you consider the city's extensive repertoire of sustainable ventures in recent years. The Lyon airport, for instance, achieved carbon-neutral status in 2017, reflecting its steadfast dedication to environmental responsibility. Moreover, numerous hotels throughout the city have garnered recognition for their sustainability endeavors, holding certificates from well-established labels.

In fact, it's the whole French event sector that has undergone a significant transformation, with convention centres now subject to stringent environmental regulations aimed at reducing their ecological footprint. These regulations encompass waste management, energy consumption and water management initiatives.

In this regard, the Lyon Convention Centre has earned the prestigious ISO 20121 certification – like ONLYLYON Tourism & Conventions – a globally recognized standard for sustainable event management that underscores the Centre's commitment to promoting responsible consumption and provides comprehensive guidelines to minimize the impacts of events altogether. Meanwhile, La Cité Internationale, an architectural masterpiece envisioned by Renzo Piano, boasts equally impressive eco-friendly credentials. The venue, for instance, employs an innovative centralized watering system, enabling the efficient collection and reuse of rainwater to nurture its sprawling 2,000-square-meter gardens.

Lyon Convention Bureau has commissioned two CSR audits, aimed to evaluate the sustainability practices employed during various business events. The primary objective is to identify

barriers that hinder the implementation of sustainable actions and, subsequently, find solutions to support the chain of service providers in embracing sustainability. Importantly, these solutions are designed to be cost-effective for conferences, ensuring they remain within budgetary constraints.

In practice, this often requires making choices, such as opting for local materials, eschewing non-local promotional items, and minimizing excessive packaging for meals. Emphasizing the use of local suppliers for all purchases and the redistribution of surplus food to charitable organizations are also pivotal aspects of Lyon's sustainable approach.

Transportation remains a significant contributor to carbon footprints, especially concerning arrivals at the event destination. In response, Lyon has positioned itself as a leader in public transportation in France, boasting the second-largest public transport network in the country. Additionally, the city offers a network of bicycle stations, with five located conveniently near the convention centre.

"Looking ahead, there's hope that conference participants who travel by train may enjoy more favorable registration rates, provided they can furnish adequate documentation of their mode of transportation to event organizers," says Valérie Ducaud, manager of Lyon Convention Bureau. *"Although this concept has been discussed, its full realization remains to be seen".* Nevertheless, Lyon is setting an inspiring example for cities aiming to host sustainable conferences, fostering a culture of responsible and eco-conscious event planning.

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Download Lyon's positive impact organization guide



AUTHENTIC SUNNY INNOVATIVE & SUSTAINABLE



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Marseille, A Global Meeting Hub on the Rise

Marseille, situated on the Mediterranean coast of southern France, is a captivating business events destination. As France's second-largest city, Marseille offers a diverse cultural milieu, culinary delights, and convenient access via its airport or train station. With a rich history and pleasant Mediterranean climate - and thanks to its proactive convention bureau and a dedicated strategy - it's been attracting the attention of European and international associations more and more lately.

Marseille has recently made headlines with its remarkable ascent in the ICCA rankings, a widely recognized barometer for evaluating cities' performance as international meeting destinations. Surging from 142nd place in 2012 to its current 43rd position, Marseille now stands as France's third-largest city for international conferences. This achievement underscores the city's dynamic spirit and its unwavering dedication to attracting and supporting international gatherings. Collaboration between local authorities and event industry professionals has yielded innovative solutions that cater to the diverse needs of organizers and participants.

To accommodate the growing demand for international conferences, Marseille's infrastructure is rapidly expanding. Venues such as the Palais du Pharo, Marseille Chanot, World Trade Center Marseille Provence, and Aix-en-Provence's conference centre have emerged as top choices for hosting events. These modern, well-equipped spaces offer tailor-made facilities to accommodate conferences and provide exceptional event experiences. Worth noting is that Marseille is the leading city in France in terms of the percentage of hotels holding the Green Key label: 30% of the hotel inventory and 70% of 4 and 5-star hotels. Meanwhile, nature is just a stone's throw away, thanks to the stunning Calanques National Park, offering an idyllic playground for post-conference relaxation and enjoyment.

THE CASE OF ESMINT

ESMINT, the European Society of Minimally Invasive Neurological Therapy, annually hosts a prominent event that serves as a vital platform for medical practitioners and scientists specializing in various neurointerventional fields. The 15th ESMINT Congress was held in Marseille at Palais du Pharo in September and brought together a record number of 1315 delegates. It aimed to foster interdisciplinary discussions among professionals in neuroradiology,

interventional neuroradiology, neurointerventional surgery, endovascular neurosurgery, and vascular neurology.

President Prof. Paolo Machi expressed his excitement about the event's relocation to Marseille, emphasizing the fresh energy it brought to the research community. The congress featured cutting-edge plenary sessions, clinical research findings, case presentations, and discussions on topics ranging from robotics and artificial intelligence to regulatory aspects of device development. Collaboration with sister societies, interactive sessions, morbi-mortality discussions, educational activities, and a vibrant social program added to the event's richness.

He added, *"The annual ESMINT Congress is one of the most important events in our specialty held around the world. As the host city for our event, Marseille provided the ideal setting not only for knowledge exchange, but also an exciting social program with plenty of opportunities in stunning locations."*

Nisan Bartov from CONGREX, the PCO that organized the event, lauded Marseille as an ideal conference destination. He cited the city's outstanding congress venue, easy accessibility to hotels and restaurants, and the proactive support from Marseille Convention Bureau as key factors contributing to its appeal.

"Marseille Convention Bureau offered comprehensive assistance to us as the organizers, including introductions to suppliers, support during negotiations, timely problem-solving, a crucial grasp of local perspectives, and the translation of our international requirements, greatly simplifying the entire congress organization process - and its success," he concluded.

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Prouvé Convention Centre



Exhibitions Centre



Place Stanislas

DESTINATION ➔ **NANCY**

- ➔ Labelled "Innovative sustainable Destination" where everything is within walking distance and only 90 minutes away from Paris
- ➔ Two venues to host every types of events: the PROUVE CONVENTION CENTRE and the EXHIBITIONS CENTRE
- ➔ DESTINATION NANCY CONVENTION BUREAU : a team dedicated to help you organise your event
- ➔ A METROPOLITAN TOURIST OFFICE, located on Place Stanislas, to promote tourism



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GrandNancy**

Nancy: A Beacon of Sustainability

Nancy, renowned as the cradle of Art Nouveau and a UNESCO-classified city for its 18th-century centre, is emerging as a prime destination for association meetings. Even if the charming capital of the Duchy of Lorraine boasts architectural gems like the iconic Place Stanislas, its allure extends beyond its historical districts and rich cultural life, encompassing a distinctive dedication to environmental stewardship.



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PROUVÉ CONVENTION CENTRE

Considered by some to be the most Italian town of eastern France, Nancy boasts a strategic location, just 1 hour and 30 minutes from Paris by high-speed train (TGV), with the station conveniently situated a mere one-minute walk from the main conference venue. Meanwhile, the entire centre is easily navigable on foot, making commuting very easy for inhabitants and visitors alike.

Accommodations are plentiful, with a capacity of 3,600 rooms, including hotels, tourist residences, furnished rentals, and bed and breakfasts. Several hotels have earned coveted distinctions, such as the Green Key and the ADEME environmental label, attesting to their commitment to sustainability.

The city's venues are equally impressive. Celebrating its 10th anniversary next year, the Prouvé Convention Centre, spanning 20,000 square meters in the city centre, occupies a former postal sorting centre, offering a unique blend of history and modernity. With abundant natural light

and a panoramic view of the city, it provides an exceptional setting for events.

CHAMPIONING SUSTAINABILITY

Recognizing the paramount importance of sustainable practices, Destination Nancy, the destination marketing organization of the city, embarked on a CSR journey in 2014. Since 2018, it has proudly held ISO 20121 certification, a pinnacle of sustainable event management worldwide. In 2020, the Nancy Tourist Office became the first in France to achieve this distinction.

Furthering its commitment, Nancy recently secured the "Destination Innovante Durable" (Innovative Sustainable Destination) label in 2022. This milestone demonstrates a broader, territory-wide commitment to sustainability, with prominent event and cultural actors actively participating. Collaborators include local hoteliers, the UMIH (a leading professional federation for cafés, hotels, restaurants, and nightclubs), the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and renowned PCOs like UL Propuls.

Key venues, such as the Zenith du Grand Nancy, L'Autre Canal, and the Opera, as well as renowned festivals like Nancy Jazz Pulsations, have also joined forces with local authorities and the Grand Nancy Metropolitan Area to ensure responsible event hosting.

CONCRETE STEPS

Nancy's commitment to hosting responsible events shines through a multitude of pragmatic measures, including eco-friendly catering partnerships, resource-efficient practices like rainwater utilization and solar panels, precise carbon footprint assessments, food waste reduction efforts, comprehensive waste sorting, and the provision of eco-conscious corporate gifts.

Event organizers receive extensive support and guidance, both in the pre-event planning stages and post-event evaluations. Accessibility for individuals with reduced mobility is ensured, encompassing induction loop systems for the hearing-impaired and specialized signage for the visually impaired.

Nancy even contributes to biodiversity by housing beehives on their rooftop and invites visitors to explore the destination's natural and wellness offerings through the Metropolitan Tourist Office's guided tours.

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RENNES

Humaine_Urbaine_Bretonne



centre-congres-rennes.fr

Unlocking the Potential of Rennes' Healthcare Sector

Nestled in the heart of Brittany, Rennes is rapidly emerging as a healthcare hub with a promising future. The city's sector is witnessing substantial growth, characterized by innovative advancements, robust research institutions, and a burgeoning digital health industry. No wonder the capital of the region is also playing host to numerous high-profile medical conferences.

Rennes's healthcare sector is characterized by innovation, research excellence, and a commitment to high-quality care. As it continues to grow and adapt to emerging trends, the city has been positioning itself as a leader in healthcare excellence, attracting professionals, researchers, and innovators from around the world.

As of today, Rennes is home to an impressive healthcare workforce, boasting over 30,000 jobs dedicated to the sector. The city's expertise extends to a wide range of medical fields, including liver pathologies, cardiology, neurology, and orthopedics, as well as cutting-edge biotechnologies and health nutrition.

Rennes's dynamic healthcare landscape features the prestigious Rennes University Hospital (CHU Rennes), known for its "high-quality care" certification, and is the largest employer in the metropolis. Furthermore, the city boasts a robust presence of research and higher education institutions, hosting around 2,600 jobs and over a dozen research laboratories.

As a recognized digital hotspot in France, Rennes has also grown a reputation in the digital health realm, housing several promising startups in e-health, imaging, and healthcare technologies. These companies have significantly contributed to Rennes'

economic vitality, with a 125% increase in jobs over the last decade.

CASES IN POINT

It hardly comes as a surprise the Couvent des Jacobins, Rennes' main convention centre, has recently been – and will be – the focal point for numerous healthcare gatherings, both national and international. These include, for instance, the European e-Health Week which was organized in September this year, the BioEM Conference which will be held in 2025 and the International Congress of Therapeutic Drug Monitoring & Clinical Toxicology in 2026.

The first event brought together nearly 700 participants, from France and abroad, in the health and medico-social sectors, with the aim of decompartmentalizing the business, technical and regulatory worlds. That very week, Biotech Santé Bretagne, a technological innovation centre in health and biotechnology in Brittany, organized a dedicated session on e-health innovation, featuring contributions from numerous local stakeholders.

Meanwhile, the BioEM Conference is expected to attract 350 participants in June 2025. Established in 2021 through the merger of the Bioelectromagnetics Society (BEMS) and the European

Bioelectromagnetics Association (EBEA), BioEM serves as a leading proponent for the exchange of ideas and the advancement of the science of natural and applied electromagnetic fields in biology and medicine. It comprises biological and physical scientists, physicians, and engineers. Operating as an international society, BioEM boasts a diverse membership hailing from approximately 40 countries and regions worldwide.

Last but not least, the International Congress of Therapeutic Drug Monitoring & Clinical Toxicology is set to attract 800 participants to the Couvent over three days in 2026. Founded with the mission of promoting research, education, and collaboration in these critical areas of healthcare, the IATDMCT brings together professionals, researchers, and experts from around the world. Through its initiatives, conferences, and publications, the association plays a pivotal role in enhancing patient care by fostering the understanding and application of drug monitoring and toxicology principles in clinical practice.

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Our own efforts in this area are best exemplified by the second cohort of Future Leaders Council – who took the reins just before IMEX Frankfurt (following the stirring work of our now alumni Future Leaders Council) – and through ICCASkills, our creditation program for the improvement of professional industry standards. Finding and supporting the meetings and events professionals of tomorrow is something we must all commit to. I stand passionately behind the advancement of ICCASkills and am delighted that we have run successful classes in Latin America, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia Pacific.

We approach the end of 2023 proudly launching the International Centre for Advancement of ICCA Skills (with the Luxembourg Convention Bureau) – a permanent ICCASkills learning hub – and renewing our unique partnership program with Tourism New Zealand. ICCASkills will continue to grow in stature, size, and scope in 2024.

The main highlight of any ICCA year is our annual Congress. This year we head to the breathtaking city of Bangkok for what will be a quite unique experience. In all my years at ICCA, I have never witnessed as much thought, creativity, and energy go into a Congress concept and strategy as this one. One of the biggest initiatives is to rip up the traditional Congress playbook and do it all very differently. The sense of freedom and possibility this approach evokes is quite inspiring.

We have a plan. We have a goal. We have asked our members what they need from us, and not in a soft and unfocused way, but in a deep dive search into the deliverables that will grow their

business opportunities and increase their commercial acumen. We have asked our associations what they need so they can make the best possible choices about who they connect with and ultimately, who they do business with. And the results? I don't know. No-one does. Yet. It is all up for discussion.

What I do know however, is the outcomes and learnings we harvest will be used to shape our industry in the coming years. Never has a concept theme – *It Start With Us* – captured the optimistic mood and spirit of a particular time and place.

2023 is the year that sees ICCA stronger than ever. For this, I thank the relationships we have and the engagement levels we maintain. The program we have planned for 2024 looks very positive, with the thrilling prospect of a 63rd Congress in Abu Dhabi. I am also delighted to report bids are coming in for 2025 and 2026, with more on the horizon.

So, my highlights reel of the year is tantalisingly incomplete, a work in progress. Congress, IBTM, ICCASkills... there is much still to be added for 2023. As I mentioned at the start of this piece, there is more to come. We are forging ahead with exciting times and new milestones will be announced in 2024. It promises to be a pivotal year for all in the ICCA global community.

This article is a result of the special collaboration established between Boardroom and ICCA, formalized through their official media partnership. Associations interested in joining ICCA can have a look at www.iccaworld.org/join/association-community





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