

# The JMIC Global Manifesto

## An Industry Rationale for the Use of Business Events as Primary Agents for Post-Pandemic Economic Recovery and Renewal

Tasked with the need to re-start economies devastated by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments right now need tools and platforms that can advance a broad-based recovery in the most effective ways.

We all recognize that the primary value of the Meetings Industry is the role it plays in facilitating and supporting essential exchanges in the areas of professional, corporate, academic and social development. These are integral to not only economic advancement but societal development as a whole.

This sector is therefore a critical element in delivering recovery as well as transition and renewal that can be immediately utilized by governments responding to these requirements.

This document articulates and promotes a set of consistent, high-level arguments. They make the case that our industry should be utilized as a strategic tool for recovery, transition, and renewal.

### Business Events as Strategic Tools for Driving Post-Pandemic Recovery and Renewal

**OUR POSITION** | That the meetings industry, which comprises a range of efficiently interconnected organizers, service providers, suppliers and facilities engaged in the development and delivery of meetings, conferences, exhibitions and related activities (collectively referred to as business events) can and should be utilized as a highly efficient and cost-effective vehicle for driving economic recovery and renewal by providing an essential platform for the economic, academic, professional and business interactions required to re-ignite these sectors.

#### Here's Why

##### 15 WAYS BUSINESS EVENTS CREATE STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE IN ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RENEWAL

1

#### Innovation & Reinvention

**Business events drive commerce, innovation, re-invention, knowledge transfer and transition—all critical requirements for recovery:**

The entire purpose of these events is to accelerate progress in every sector they support through communications, information sharing and collective engagement. This naturally facilitates the kind of innovation and re-invention that is always a driver in economic and professional advancement but will be particularly critical in adapting to the demands and expectations that will result from the “new” economies and economic priorities arising in the post-pandemic period.



2

#### Multi-sector Impacts

**Business events simultaneously advance a wide range of different sectors:**

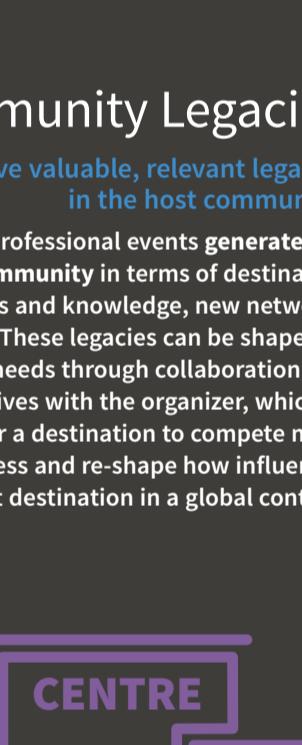
Business events are an efficient means of supporting the recovery and advancement of a wide range of economic, professional, academic and business sectors. As a result, they can drive activation, renewal and re-engagement across the many different sectors that will need to be stimulated in order to deliver a broad based recovery rather than simply addressing a limited range of these sectors individually. They enable action by others rather than being limited to what they can achieve on their own.

3

#### Relationships & Trust

**Business events restore relationships and build trust:**

Business events efficiently utilize the collective power of group dynamics and thinking to achieve a high level of integration. This is directly relevant to the need to repair the many “disconnects” that will have resulted from measures taken to isolate and distance during the pandemic. They are also about creating and maintaining the productive networks which will be critically important in the face of the kinds of global tensions (border closures, transportation shutdowns, isolation measures) that have come about in the course of the pandemic and will persist beyond the time when such initial restrictions are removed.



4

#### Diversification & Self-sufficiency

**They facilitate economic diversification and self-sufficiency:**

With the COVID-19 experience having disrupted supply chains and enhanced the evident value of economic self-sufficiency, many communities have realized the strength and resiliency to be had in a more self-contained and diversified local economy. Business events facilitate this process by supporting the kinds of exchanges that lead to new relationships, investments and non-traditional business activities that can be used to drive diversification in the local and regional economy, up to and including the creation of new events that engage key interests in a collective approach to selected sectors.

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#### Transition & Renewal

**They are the key to economic and societal transition and to repositioning in the “new” economies of the future:**

Evolving social and economic conditions arising from the pandemic-induced recession means that the new economy will likely be quite different, embodying elements of the experience and knowledge economies that are replacing older models. Business events that accompany recovery will serve as necessary agents of change and transformation to ensure a more progressive form of economic activity and a more stable and therefore resilient economy for the future, which is a new goal for governments everywhere.



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#### Talent & Investment

**They attract the talent and investment needed for economic diversification and can be focused on priority areas for government policy:**

Business events, particularly international events, are magnets for individuals and investment resources that drive key development and professional sectors.

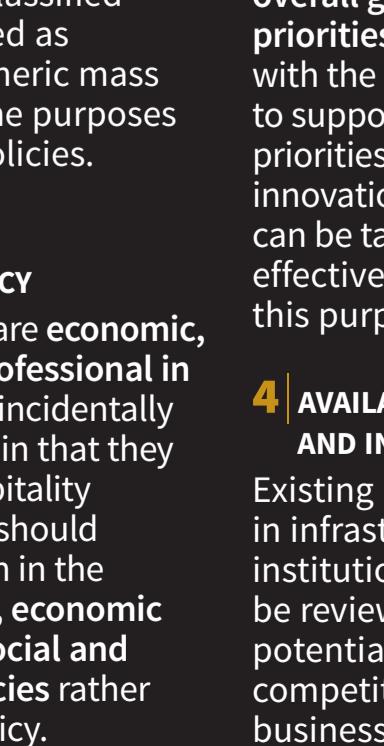
As a result, they are important strategic tools that can be used by a region or destination to selectively stimulate top economic and social development priorities. Criteria for pursuing specific business events can be readily adjusted to focus on areas of specific interest for economic, social and educational development that address government policy priorities for key sector development.

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#### Path to Sustainable Development

**They lead the “renewed” economy toward sustainability:**

A new priority for most governments is a focus on sustainable development due to a variety of new agendas (environmental, educational, social equity) that again require productive interactions to succeed. The key elements of sustainability have been embedded in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), which are in turn directly addressed by industry events as demonstrated in recent studies that show meetings, conventions and exhibitions in fact address the widest possible spectrum of UNSDG's.



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#### Controlled Environment

**They take place in a highly controlled environment with strong health and safety measures in place and detailed contact tracing information available:**

Because of the highly structured nature of business events of gathering relative to other forms of public assembly, in many cases, participants are pre-registered and in advance of, during and after an event. In addition, facility policies are generally such that rigorous standards of hygiene to ensure greater compliance with accepted protocols or other gatherings such as concerts or sporting events.

9

#### Community Legacies

**Their outputs are measurable—so ROI can be clearly demonstrated:**

While the economic proposition for delegate events (tourism and business) is well understood, the social and professional benefits to generic, reliable measures, including those of both delegates and other event participants are not “incidental” to this purpose and can be measured and reported with greater precision.



10

#### Uses Existing Investments

**They often have funding mechanisms already in place:**

The nature of business events is that they already in place user-pav, which means that they offer huge leverage for any other sectors. As a result, they are not as capital-intensive as other sectors. Seeking support but are still facilitate the desired outcomes. They also efficiently utilize existing government and infrastructure as event facilities, transportation systems and other assets already in place, such that business incentives can be quickly generated without the need to establish entirely new programs.

11

#### Digitalization

**They are already responding and can deliver the content and results in person, via the virtual world or both:**

The world is struggling with the disruptions associated with the pandemic and the “virtual” component that can further support the “real” world. This means that the potential to leverage global exposure, and these have become increasingly sophisticated and global audiences, with the corresponding greater image and legacy benefits for the host community.



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#### Laboratories for Public Policy

**They can be used as “laboratories” for government policies by shifting the risk for testing new re-opening**

Many aspects of the re-opening equation carry significant risks, including the possibility of a return to lockdown and other measures. In these respects, business events can be valuable tools for testing new approaches in a safe, well-controlled environment before they are more generally adopted.

Effectively testing the alternative direction to a “new normal” and the appetite for alternative business and social strategies.

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#### Support for the Visitor Economy

**They timely support the visitor economy and create a positive image:**

The road to travel recovery will likely be a long one— and many “optional” travel activities will thus likely lag behind the more time-sensitive imperative that help overcome reluctance to travel and thus stimulate destination travel and hospitality interests. They also offer opportunities for a more stable and therefore resilient economy for the future, which is a new goal for governments everywhere.



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#### Image & Reputation

**Signature business events can make (or restore) a reputation as business centre:**

Prominent business events generate profile and prestige for the host destination in a globally-visible way. In the established world, destinations will need to consolidate their leadership position and opportunities for other destinations to raise their profile as attractive business destinations if they can offer alternative attributes such as environmental quality and safety, which will be increasingly in demand in a post-pandemic world.

These opportunities are often available in the short term, but the appetite for alternative business and social strategies.

15

#### Measurable ROI

**Their outputs are measurable—so ROI can be clearly demonstrated:**

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#### FIVE IMPORTANT POLICY IMPLICATIONS

**To be applied in a practical way, the arguments above can and need to be embedded in government policies and structures. A starting point for this process is an acknowledgment that:**

“The document prepared and issued by the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC) is grateful for the industry-wide input received in support of the development of this manifesto.”

1

#### CONTROLLED GATHERINGS

**Business events are not public gatherings but highly controlled assemblies and should be classified and distinguished from generic mass gatherings for the purposes of re-opening policies:**

Major business and professional events generate key legacies for the host community in terms of destination profile, enhanced skills and knowledge, new networks and more. These legacies can be shaped to address the priority needs through the collaborator, which at the same time is a way for a destination to compete more effectively for new business and re-shape how influential attendees regard that destination in a global context.

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