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# The JMIC Global Manifesto

An Industry Rationale for the Use of Business  
Events as Key Drivers for Multidimensional  
Growth and Transformation

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Against a backdrop of economic uncertainty and societal change, governments globally need tools and platforms that can advance a broad-based growth and transformation 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 development but societal advancement as a whole.**

**This sector is therefore a critical element in sustaining growth and driving transformation that can be strategically utilized by governments in their development priorities and policies both short and long term.**

**This document articulates and promotes a set of high-level positions for engaging with local government, corporates, institutions and community.**

**The contents of the manifesto are not new – they are consistent with the arguments we have been putting forward for many years about the critical role of business events in economic and societal advancement. We can show that what we are proposing is working – from case studies around the world in response to global challenges – to drive economic and social impact locally and regionally.**

## DELIVERING THE MESSAGE

We know that the decisions to leverage business events as a driver for economic stimulation and diversification will always be local. Local authorities benefit from experiences in other parts of the world to jumpstart and accelerate their progress. The primary purpose of this manifesto is to be a resource for industry members to inform and align with their own local programs and initiatives.

By adapting general principles to the specific needs of individual cities and countries, the result will be destination-specific strategies that activate the power of business events for economic stimulation for the most urgent priorities and policies of local and regional governments.

# Business Events as Strategic Tools for Driving Multidimensional Growth and Transformation

**OUR POSITION** | That the meetings industry, which comprises a range of 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 growth and transformation by providing an essential platform for economic, academic, professional and personal interactions.

# Here's Why | 15 Ways Business Events Create Strategic Advantage in Multidimensional Growth and Transformation



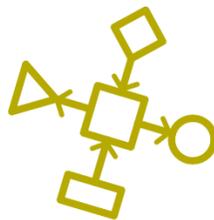
1 | Innovation & Reinvention



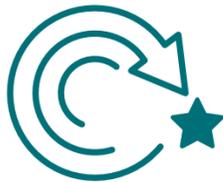
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# 1 | Innovation & Reinvention

**Business events drive commerce, innovation, re-invention, knowledge transfer and transition – all critical requirements for growth and transformation:**

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 future.



## 2 |

# Multi-sector Impacts

Business events simultaneously advance a wide range of different sectors:

Business events are efficient means of supporting the advancement of a **wide range of economic, professional, academic and business sectors**. As a result, they can drive activation, engagement, and transformation across the many different sectors that will need to be stimulated in order to deliver a multidimensional growth 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.

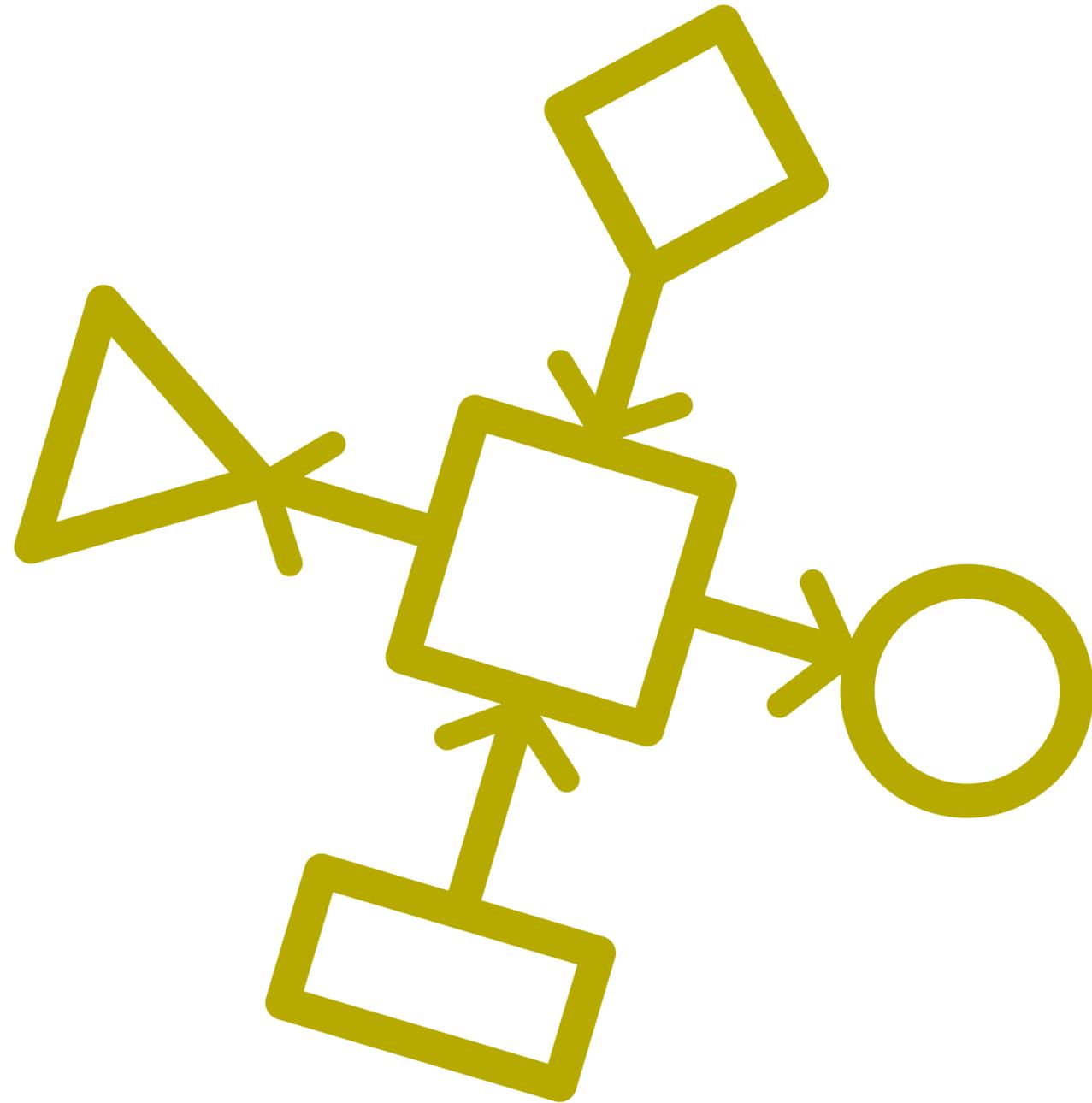


### 3 |

## Relationships & Trust

### Business events develop relationships and build trust:

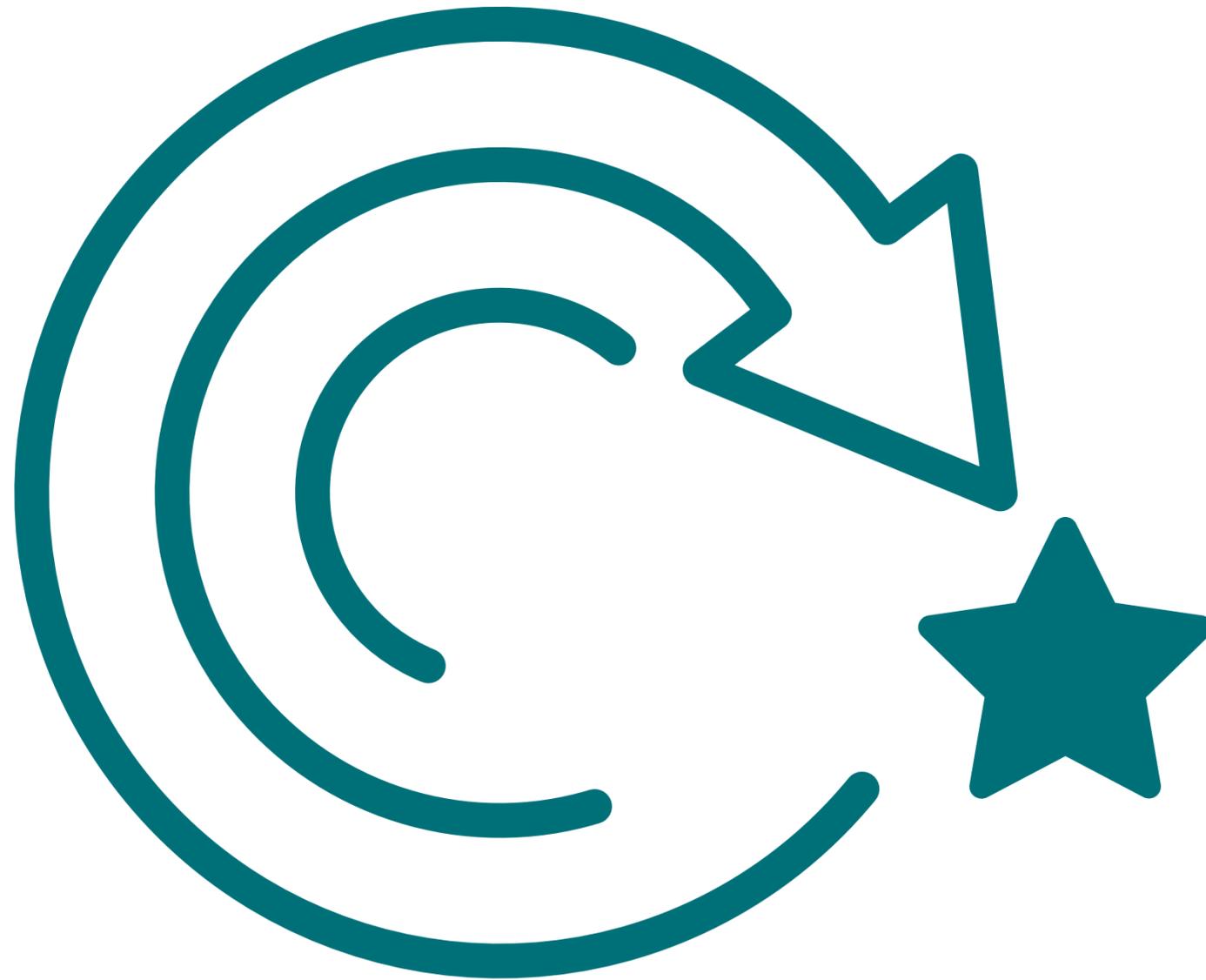
Business events efficiently **utilize the collective power of group dynamics** and thinking to achieve a high level of engagement. They are also about creating and maintaining the collaborative and productive networks which will be critically important in the face of present and future global tensions (economic instability, geopolitical conflicts, public health security).



## 4 | Diversification & Self-sufficiency

**Business events facilitate economic diversification and self-sufficiency:**

With the recent experience of disrupted global supply chains enhancing the evident value of economic self-sufficiency, many communities have realized the **strength and resilience 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



## 5 |

# Transition & Renewal

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

Evolving social and economic conditions means that the new economy will likely be quite different, embodying elements of the experience, knowledge, and digital economies. Business events 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 an abiding goal for governments everywhere.



## 6 | Talent & Investment

**Business events 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 talent and investments** that drive key economic and professional sectors. As a result, they are important strategic tools that can be used by a city, region or country to selectively stimulate top economic and social priorities. Criteria for pursuing specific business events can be readily adjusted to address government policy priorities for key sectors and societal development.



## 7 | Path to Sustainable Development

**Business events lead the “renewed” economy toward sustainability:**

Sustainable development has long been a focus for the events industry. Connected to programmes like the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Guidelines (UNSDGs), the Net Zero Carbon Events (NZCE) industry initiative firmly **embeds the principles of sustainability within the business events industry practices and client expectations**, addressing everything from waste management and energy conservation to local sourcing and hiring practices.



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## Controlled Environment

**Business events take place in a highly controlled environment with strong health and safety measures in place:**

Because of the highly structured nature of business events and facilities, they represent a **much more secure form of gathering relative to other forms of public assembly**. In most cases, participants are pre-registered and organizers have many options for communicating with them before, during and after an event. In addition, facility policies are generally such that rigorous standards are in place to ensure far better compliance with accepted protocols than would be possible in a general public setting or other gatherings such as concerts or sporting events.



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## Community Legacies

Business events create valuable, relevant legacies in the host community:

Major business and professional events **generate key legacies for the host community** in terms of destination profile, transferred skills and knowledge, new networks and image enhancement. These legacies can be shaped to address priority community needs through collaboration and creating shared objectives with the organizer, 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.

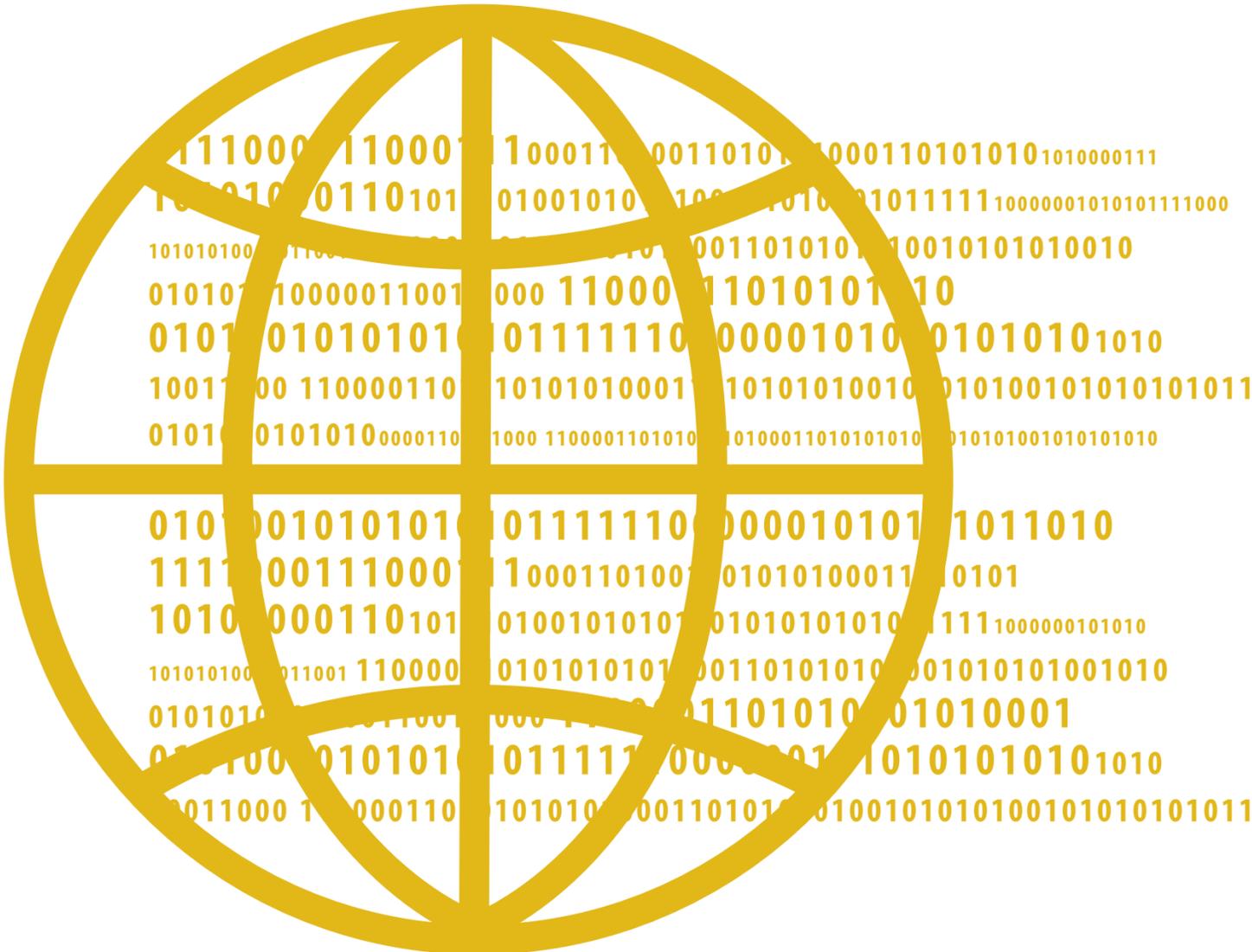


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## Uses Existing Investments

Business events often have funding mechanisms already in place:

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

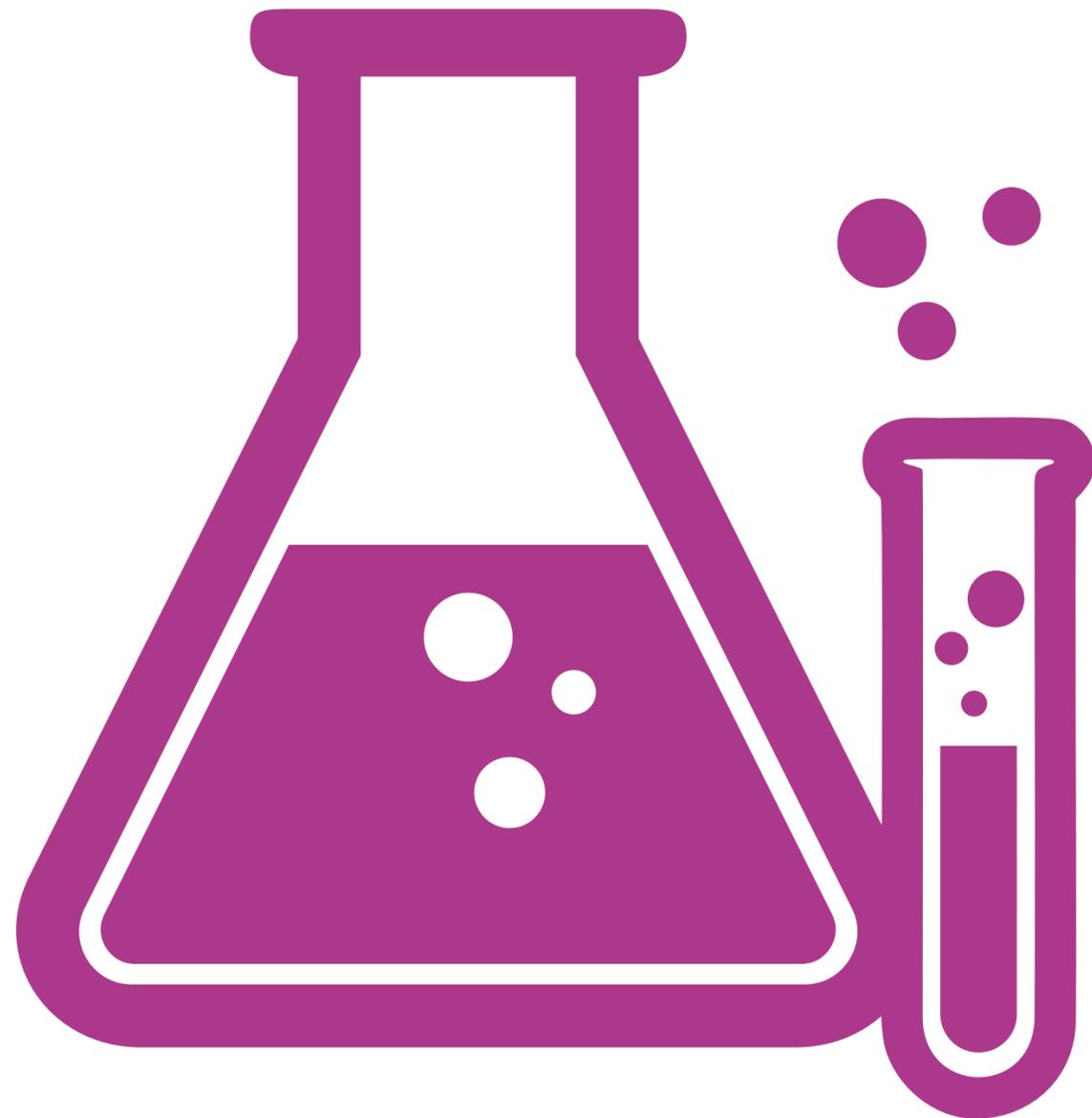


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## Digitalization

Business events are responding to the growing movement toward digitalization and can deliver content and results in person, via the virtual world or both:

Most business events today have a **companion digital component that can further extend global exposure and reach**, and have become increasingly sophisticated. This means that the potential impact of an event can be extended to a global audience, with correspondingly greater image and legacy benefits for the host community.



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## Laboratories for Public Policy

**Business events can be used as testbeds for new government policies and economic development strategies:**

With the wide audience on-site, business events provide a stage for governments to present, influence and assess public perceptions towards new policies and economic development plans. Governments and institutions often have opportunities to scope participation and shape agendas at business events to receive real-time, on-ground feedback to tweak their policies and strategies.

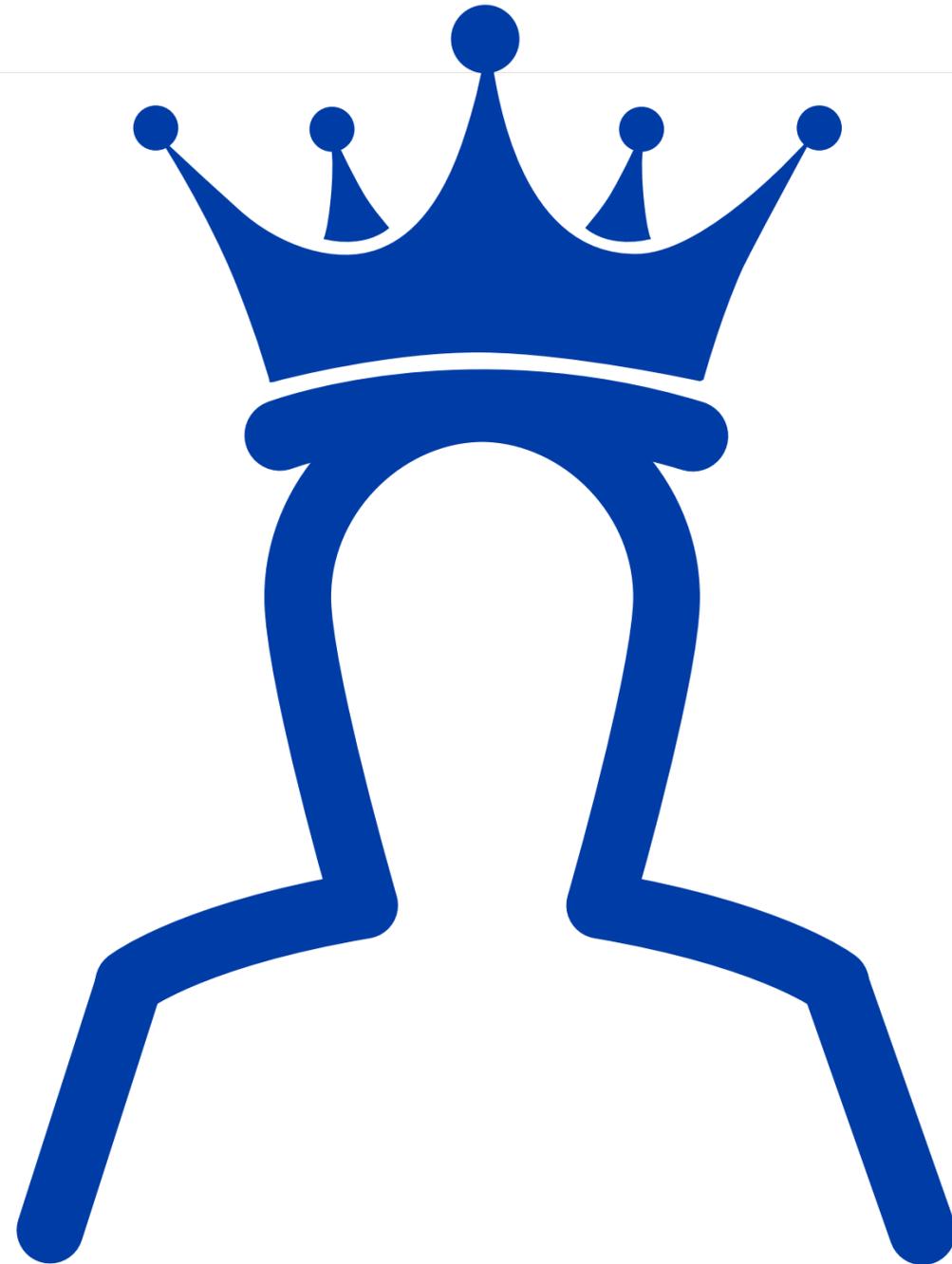


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## Support for the Visitor Economy

**Business events support the visitor economy and create a specific, timely rationale and incentive for travel:**

Business events offer a time-sensitive imperative to travel and thus **stimulate revenues for the local hospitality sectors**. They also offer opportunities for second or third tier destinations to build their profile as traveller expectations evolve and more people are looking to combine work with leisure with changing, hybrid work environments and increased focus on work-life balance and general well-being.

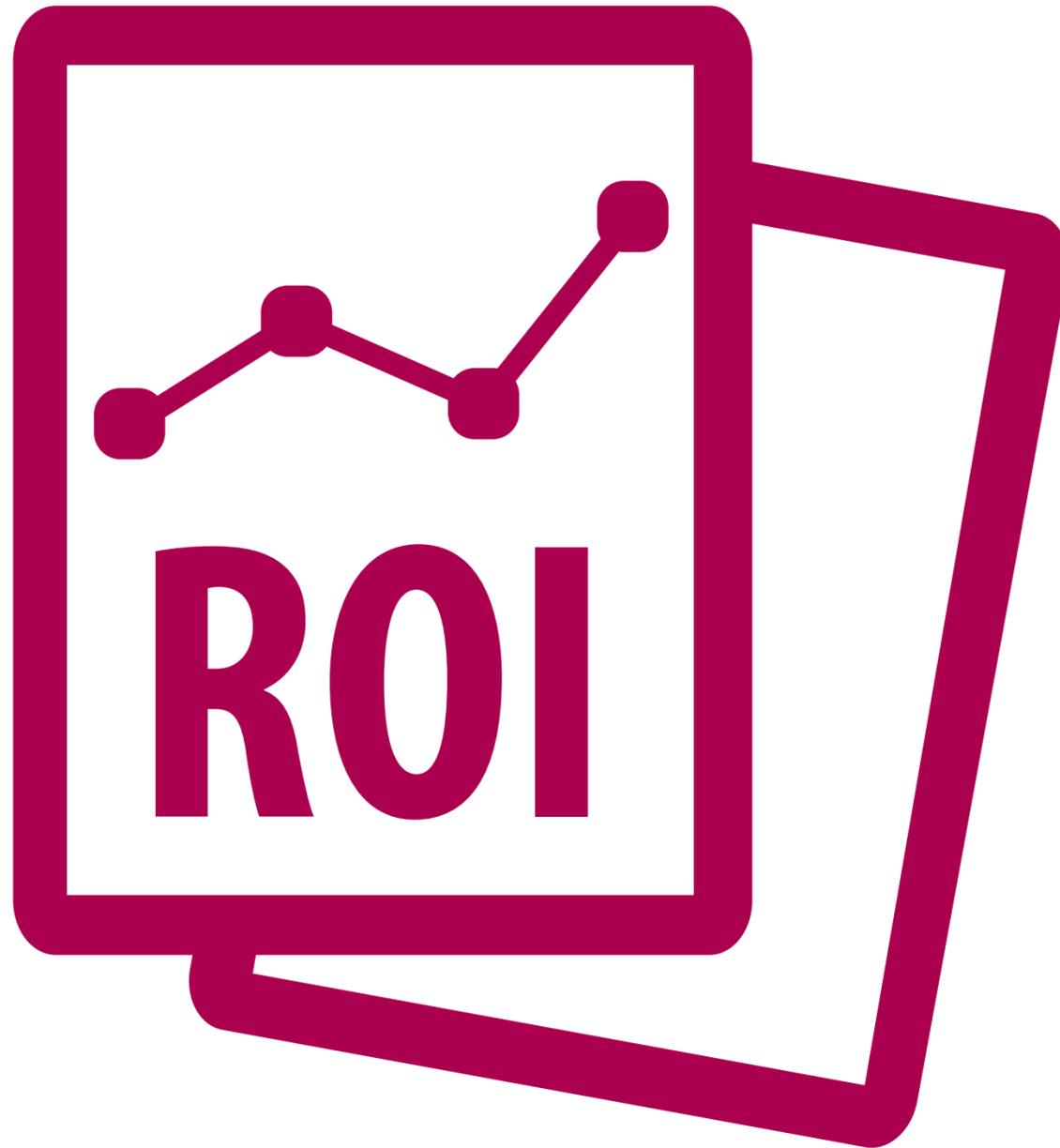


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## Image & Reputation

**Signature business events can cement a destination's reputation as a business centre:**

Prominent business events generate profile and prestige for the host destination in a globally-visible way. In our ever-changing world with evolving economies, **established destinations will need to consolidate their leadership position** under new conditions. At the same time, there will be **new opportunities for emerging destinations** to raise their profile as attractive business destinations if they can offer alternate attributes such as a business and work-friendly climate coupled with the right social and environmental conditions which will be increasingly in demand in an inter-connected world.



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## Measurable ROI

**Business events' results are measurable  
– so ROI can be clearly demonstrated:**

While the value proposition for business events range from the economic impacts of delegate spending (tourism benefits) to economic and professional development outcomes generated, reliable measurements such as sophisticated economic impact models are already in place for both. **Delegates and other event participants are not “incidental” visitors – so their travel purposes and spending patterns can be measured accurately and the returns can be measured and reported with greater precision.**

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

**1 | ECONOMIC vs TOURISM POLICY**

Business events are **economic, scientific and professional in nature**, and only incidentally tourism-related (in that they support the hospitality sector). They should therefore be seen in the **context of trade, economic development, social and investment policies** rather than tourism policy.

**2 | ALIGNMENT WITH POLICY PRIORITIES**

There should be an effort to **align business events and overall government policy priorities** so that events with the greatest potential to support / advance those priorities (health, education, innovation, major events) can be targeted and more effectively utilized for this purpose.

**3 | AVAILABLE FUNDING AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Existing investments in infrastructure and institutions should be reviewed for their potential to enhance competitiveness in the business events market. **Financial support and increased competitiveness can often be delivered by offering relief to event organizers** for the use of existing government-owned facilities rather than creating new incentive programs.

**4 | CONTROLLED GATHERINGS**

Business events are **not public gatherings but highly controlled assemblies** and should be classified and distinguished from generic mass gatherings.

**5 | AN INTEGRAL PART OF A 'VISION' FOR THE FUTURE**

With governments today being called upon to articulate and demonstrate a **vision for multidimensional growth and transformation**, business events can be incorporated as strategic tools to achieve the stated goals.

# Ten Steps to Delivering the Message

The Global Manifesto is not an end in itself – it is rather a framework for addressing the central concept which is that business events can and should be seen as a priority vehicle for multidimensional growth and transformation.

**Due to the global and highly decentralized nature of our industry, this is not a message that can be effectively delivered from a single central authority. It must instead be communicated and argued locally and regionally, where local industry members are in the best possible position to understand and interpret local needs and identify the best opportunities for communicating effectively with governments and the community.**

Part of the manifesto is therefore advice on how this can be done by the industry. Based on the experiences of many industry members, here are some key steps to consider;

## 1 | Get organized:

No individual or group can do this job alone. Governments will want to know that they are getting a consensus view. This means that if there is an existing local organization in place they should be empowered to act and speak on behalf of the industry as a whole and if there is not, one should be formed.

In organizing such an entity, consider potential alliances with other relevant organizations such as professional, business, academic or special interest groups with shared understanding and objectives. This kind of alignment will further strengthen your position.

## 2 | Do your research:

At a minimum, your group should understand who key decision-makers are; what their current policies and priorities are for community and economic advancement and what positions if any they have on issues relating to business events. There will also likely be a statement of government priorities for action – potentially in the form of an election platform statement – that can also be a very useful reference to what their priority concerns and “promises” are.

## 3 | Identify the top issues in your community:

In most parts of the world today, economic growth and societal development are top priorities. However, many other issues will be seen as priorities as well and these should be understood as they likely relate to business events that can be used as examples of how business events can support community concerns and government policy priorities.

## 4 | Organize your data and “stories”:

Arguments must be accompanied by examples and numbers to support and illustrate them. Hard data such as economic impact study results are helpful but vastly underestimate true industry value so consider enhancing this with case studies that illustrate event outcomes from your own experiences. Legacies, destination image enhancements and relevant knowledge transfers are often particularly useful as they enable others to more easily understand the overall concepts at a practical level and can be extrapolated to other events.

## 5 | Access available industry resources:

Many resources and case studies are already available and can be accessed via the JMIC website [www.themeetingsindustry.org](http://www.themeetingsindustry.org) or [www.the-iceberg.org](http://www.the-iceberg.org), among others. Referencing such documents will not only save time and effort but also demonstrate the effort that has been put into managing issues of concern.

## 6 | Do the “translation”:

The first principle of successful communications is to organize your arguments into terms that are of greatest interest to your audience, and this is particularly the case with governments. This needs to be positioned not as what you *want* but rather what you can do for *them* and may require you to review their list of priorities as above to select examples of how the industry can help them achieve their own objectives. Avoid the use of industry jargon, acronyms or agendas and instead focus on areas you know to be of importance to your audience.

## 7 | Create a demonstration project:

Rather than speaking in general terms, it is far better to select one urgent priority and illustrate the principle by explaining the kind of event that would address these and how, in practical terms, this would be done. It may be best to actually propose a specific project (i.e., a small and highly organized event to bring together a local / regional audience on a topic of mutual interest and to demonstrate the outcomes from the event).

## 8 | Delivery: choose an occasion / use your contacts:

Timing is key in delivering your industry message – there are often forums that lend themselves to putting forward a proposal which is well thought-out. However, a private audience with a key decision-maker or committee can be more effective as it allows for detailed review. Personal / professional contacts with politicians / officials may be the best route if this lends credibility; at the same time, government figures often officiate or participate at events taking place in such local facilities as convention centres which can provide a pre/post opportunity for a conversation.

## 9 | Practice your “elevator conversation”:

Often an opportunity will present itself unexpectedly (i.e., during an event occasion as above) and there will only be enough time to make an overall comment or two that must generate enough interest to produce a further opportunity. A very compact statement (such as paraphrasing the manifesto, using a locally relevant example) may be sufficient to start an engagement but only if it is decided and rehearsed in advance to ensure clarity and an interest in following up.

# 10 | Feed back to your colleagues:

Sharing is the essence of collaboration, and is an integral part of our industry. Once you have organized and delivered a campaign, document it and its outcomes and share this with industry colleagues who are all looking for insights into how our story can be most effectively communicated to governments. JMIC and The Iceberg both maintain repositories of industry resources and welcome any new additions that will help inform and advise industry members of your achievements.



This 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.**

**FOR MORE RESOURCES AND INFORMATION**

Excerpts of this input can be viewed as part of the 2-part JMIC / Iceberg  
webinar by accessing links on either of their web sites:

[www.themeetingsindustry.org](http://www.themeetingsindustry.org) | [www.the-iceberg.org](http://www.the-iceberg.org)