

TORONTO TURNS BLUE FOR GLOBAL MEETINGS INDUSTRY DAY

The day recognizes the global impact meetings, conferences and events play in communities, as the industry remains devastated by the pandemic

TORONTO, April 8, 2021 – Today, Toronto attractions, meeting venues, landmarks and hotels join businesses around the globe in support of Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID) to highlight the vital role that meetings, conferences and events play in communities like Toronto. Landmarks across the city will be turning blue as a collective show of support for an industry currently decimated by the global pandemic with hundreds of cancelled or postponed events over the past year.

Turning blue for GMID 2021 include the CN Tower, the Toronto Sign, the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Exhibition Place, Rogers Centre and Scotiabank Arena. Numerous other businesses in the tourism and hospitality community in Toronto are showing their support online via #GMID2021.

[A recent analysis](#) by Destination Toronto found that the pandemic's toll on the meetings industry in Toronto resulted in an economic loss of \$833 million stemming from 463 cancelled or postponed meetings and 380,000 attendees unable to experience their conference or Toronto as a host destination.

As a further show of support for the meetings industry, Mayor John Tory proclaimed April 8, 2021, Global Meetings Industry Day in Toronto.

"There is no doubt that the past year has been extremely tough for Toronto's meetings, conferences and events industry and everyone that works within it. This is an industry that fuels the economy, creates jobs, and helps welcome people to Toronto from around the world," said Mayor John Tory. "We are working to get people vaccinated as quickly as supply allows so we can bring an end to this pandemic and make sure we have a strong economic recovery. The meetings industry will be part of that recovery and I'm confident that once restrictions end, we'll be ready to once again host meetings in every corner of the city."

With ongoing restrictions, live meetings may not currently be taking place in Toronto, but the work being done to prepare for the return of live events is well underway. Some of the initiatives include enhanced meeting facilities, physical distancing measures and redesigned food & beverage options that increase guest safety.

"Our sectors were hit first, the hardest and will take the longest to recover. I commend their strength and resiliency over the past year, as they worked to adapt to the evolving environment during this difficult time," said Minister Lisa MacLeod. "I look forward to once again welcoming guests to Toronto, and will continue to support these organizations to ensure they come back stronger than before."

Global Meetings Industry Day is championed nationally by Meetings Means Business Canada (MMBC). MMBC is hosting a virtual event emphasizing the meeting industry's readiness to reopen when restrictions are lifted. Locally, the day features events for meeting professionals by their respective associations, including the Toronto chapter of Meeting Professionals International.

"Virtual events may have become the norm during the pandemic, but in-person, live events are irreplaceable," said Scott Beck, President & CEO of Destination Toronto. "The economic recovery of the city cannot be fully realized until the meetings industry returns. We're confident that once restrictions

are lifted, meetings, conferences and events—and the many benefits that come with them—will thrive once again and do what they do best – bringing people together and experiencing everything this great city has to offer.”

ABOUT DESTINATION TORONTO

Toronto’s visitor economy is a vital economic engine for the city, generating more than \$10 billion in economic activity and supporting 70,000 jobs in 2019. Destination Toronto’s mandate is to reflect the breadth and diversity of Toronto’s people, places and culture to inspire residents and visitors to meet, visit and explore our city. Operating in partnership with the City of Toronto, the Greater Toronto Hotel Association and the Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, Destination Toronto markets and promotes the city to global travellers, attracts and supports major meetings and events, and supports local businesses to maximize the opportunities of visitor spending. For more information please visit [DestinationToronto.com](https://www.destinationtoronto.com).

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