ICCA and BestCities extend partnership for Incredible Impacts ‘beyond tourism’ programme

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ICCA and BestCities Global Alliance have announced the annual ‘Incredible Impacts’ grant programme – designed to award associations leaving lasting legacies – will return for its fourth year, after their partnership was renewed for a further three years.

The partnership renewal comes at a pivotal time in the global meetings industry, when it’s never been more important to showcase the “beyond tourism” impact of face-to-face meetings, and celebrate inspiring work from international associations – through factors like sustainability, diversity, environmentalism and knowledge sharing.

The Incredible Impacts programme, which is now open for submissions, presents an opportunity to showcase best examples of legacy in the global meetings industry. This ‘legacy’ can take shape in many ways and recognizes associations which have made an impact – whether that be social, economic, or on their wider industry – that lasts long after delegates fly home from an event.
Previous winning examples include associations which have positively influenced social and governmental change, to scholarship programmes and even health testing being opened to the public in an event’s host city.

With three grants of US $7,500 available, entrants have the opportunity to be recognized for their innovative work while securing funds that can be used towards future legacy projects.

**Lesley Williams**, **Managing Director of BestCities Global Alliance**, said: “This period of uncertainty presents an opportunity for us to step back and recognise the incredible impacts achieved through face-to-face meetings - the lives that have been changed and barriers that have been broken.”

“We're inviting international associations who have an outstanding story to tell to use this programme to showcase their legacy, or the potential impact of a future event, while at the same time securing valuable funding to support their cause.

“Last year’s winners, the European Lung Foundation in conjunction with European Respiratory Society; International AIDS Society and the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect were all commended as leading exemplars of excellence within the global meetings industry.

**ICCA CEO, Senthil Gopinath**, said: “ICCA is delighted to have been partnering with BestCities to communicate the importance of the impact of associations and their meetings on all aspects of society: from health and science to advocacy and human rights, which is more relevant now than ever before.”

“The biggest value from international association meetings comes from the vast quantities of knowledge that are created and shared, the inward investment and business connections that are stimulated, and the societal, healthcare and economic challenges that are addressed and solved. Incredible Impacts has been designed to celebrate some of the best examples of projects that showcase the wider impact of these meetings, and more importantly, to encourage greater awareness and new projects.”

“We look forward to collecting and sharing more amazing stories about the power of meetings.”

**Tracy Bury**, Deputy CEO of World Confederation for Physical Therapy and past Incredible Impacts winner and judge, said: “It’s never felt more important than right now, to be capturing these success stories as evidence of what can be achieved, and we hope that the programme can be used as evidence to help drive the bounce-back of the events sector, and what our associations and partners can do together, with a renewed focus on social impact and accountability.”

Those interested in applying for the 2020 grants must simply demonstrate a track-record in "beyond tourism" or legacy programme related to their international meetings, and consider how they will use the grant to better upcoming or future events. Associations interested in applying can nominate themselves or candidate associations can be nominated by any ICCA member.

For further information on the Incredible Impacts Grant and for details on how to submit an application and important deadlines, visit: [www.bestcities.net](http://www.bestcities.net), or [www.iccaworld.org/incredibleimpacts](http://www.iccaworld.org/incredibleimpacts). Shortlisted applicants will be asked to share further information for the second stage of the programme.

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For further information, interviews or imagery for BestCities contact: Daniel Glendinning, Wire, daniel@wearewire.co, +44 0141 648 9610.

**Notes to editor:**

Examples of beyond tourism impacts or legacy include:

- Knowledge and/or skills transfers to developing countries.
• Public awareness of healthcare or environmental issues, or achievement of improved outcomes.
• Positive impact on national and regional policies and practices.
• Advancing future intellectual and/or societal leaders (could be general young members of the association, or young women, or young people from developing countries, etc).

About BestCities

BestCities Global Alliance is an international network of leading convention destinations around the globe. They are distinguished by the commitment of the members' convention offices to offering special standards of service. Members include Berlin, Bogotá, Cape Town, Copenhagen, Dubai, Houston, Madrid, Melbourne, Singapore, Tokyo and Vancouver.

By working together, BestCities adds a unique value to its member cities. This ‘Alliance thinking’ not only brings a level of creative client solutions no individual partner city could deliver on their own, but in turn helps BestCities’ members achieve their own objectives, better than they could alone.

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About ICCA

Shaping the future and value of international association meetings

ICCA - the International Congress and Convention Association - is the global community and knowledge hub for the international association meetings industry.

ICCA is the global association leader for the international meetings industry and specialises in the international association meetings sector, offering unrivalled data, education, communication channels, and business development and networking opportunities. Since its establishment in 1963, ICCA represents the world's top destinations and most experienced suppliers specialised in handling, transporting and accommodating international meetings and events, and comprises of over 1,100 member companies and organisations in almost 100 countries and territories worldwide.

As of 2020 ICCA encompasses all major stakeholders in the world of association meetings, by opening its doors to associations with the launch of the "ICCA Association Community", offering education, connections, tools and resources to associations to organise more effective meetings.

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