

Council Recommends Meeting Metrics

Joint Meetings Industry Council report puts forward criteria for measuring meeting value



Measuring and reporting meetings' value continues to be a major priority for the meetings industry, according to the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC). In September, the group released a report commissioned to determine the state of industry value measurement and make recommendations as to how those measurement processes can be enhanced in the future.

"Good and consistent measurement procedures are essential to maintaining industry credibility in the face of increasing expectations in this regard from governments, organizers, and participants," said JMIC President Philippe Fournier in the report. "In a time when the meetings industry has a great deal to contribute to global economic recovery and development, we need to be able to advance our value proposition as effectively as possible and demonstrate the ability to measure our value in terms that will resonate with the broader global community."

Executed by Dr. Leo Jago — a former research professor at the Universities of Victoria and Nottingham who now serves as Australia's chief economist for tourism, as well as general manager of Tourism Research

Australia — the study involves an analysis of representative value measurement models from around the world to determine how well these served existing and future needs. It also includes recommendations for how any identified gaps could best be addressed.

Among the Study's Conclusions:

- 1 Calculating national economic contribution estimates should use an approach originally developed under the United Nations World Tourism Organization;
- 2 Using this model is limited by the high cost of collecting the data and the challenges of applying the results to specific local or regional situations;
- 3 Regional or local models require a different approach. It was noted that a number of models have been developed in recent times to assess the economic contribution of business events at the regional or local levels;
- 4 The "beyond tourism" or legacy value of business events is important, but hard to reliably measure. The researchers hold that these are more effectively demonstrated using case studies instead of trying to convert them to a financial equivalent.

Fournier stated that the completion of this report allows for the JMIC to provide guidance to planners and destinations looking for credible ways to track and document the contribution they are making. This can range from supporting local businesses to helping grow the community and regional industries.

"It will also provide us as JMIC with a framework for documenting and communicating the values we see as associated with our sector and facilitate the completion of a directory of value models and a 'toolkit' for using such data in advocacy," Fournier added in his statement.

JMIC was established in 1978 as a forum for the exchange of information and perspectives amongst international associations engaged in various aspects of the meetings industry. According to the council, it is now engaged in the process of "building better communications and linkages amongst member organizations" and advancing the industry's profile "along with a greater appreciation of the value the industry brings to the global economy."

Its members include many of the major meetings associations in the United States and abroad, including Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), Meeting Professionals International (MPI), the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), and the Society of Incentive Travel Executives (Site).

— Matt Alderton

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To download the "JMIC Report on Meetings Value Models," visit www.themeetingsindustry.org