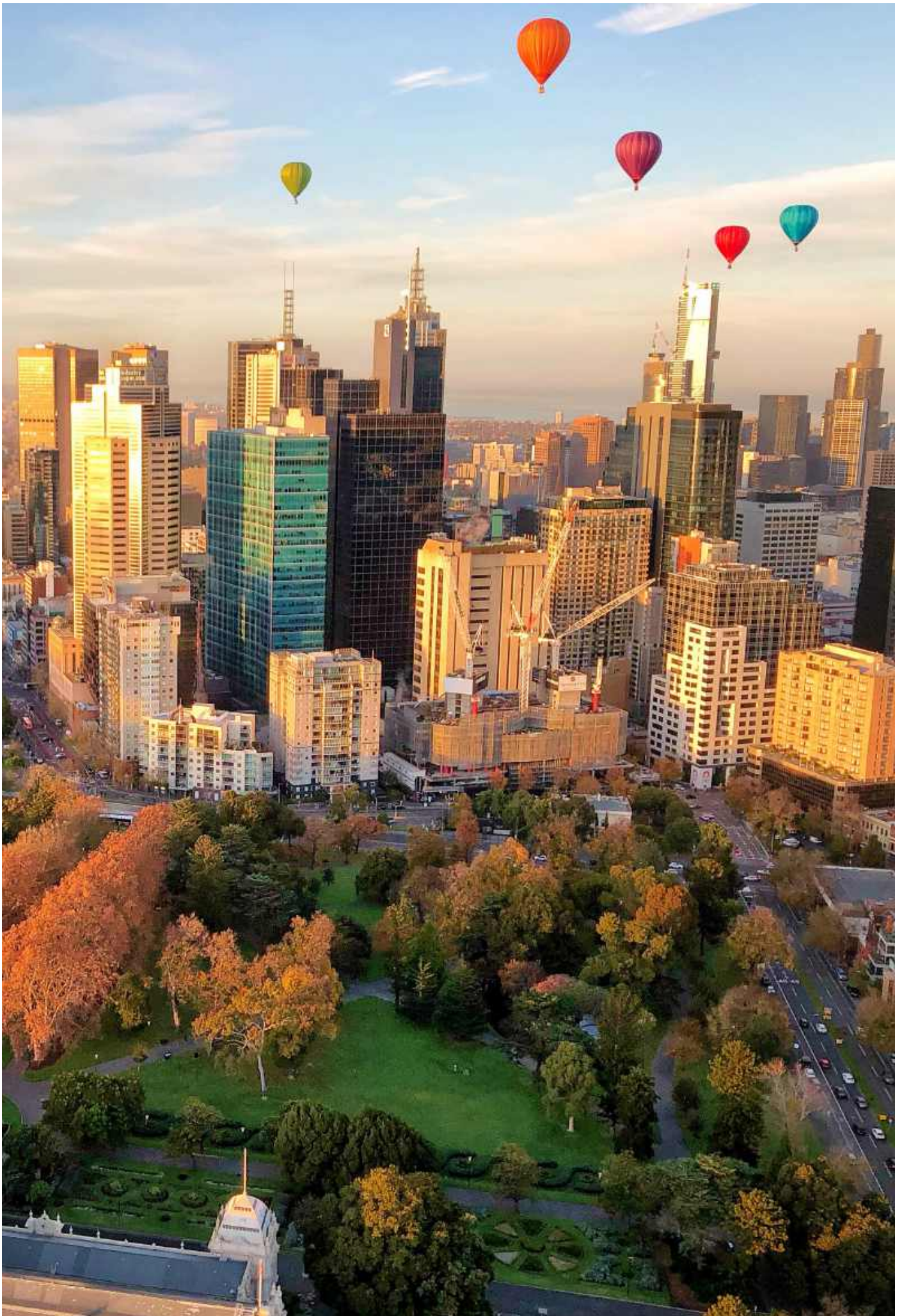



BESTCITIES CASE STUDIES COLLECTION – COMMON LEARNINGS AND KEY TIPS







The BestCities Case Studies Collection demonstrates a growing focus on creating meaningful, long term impacts from congresses, moving beyond simply hosting successful gatherings to driving change in industries and communities. There are a number of shared insights which can be drawn from a review of the following 8 case studies.

- Global DIY Summit
- World Down Syndrome Congress
- European Respiratory Society International Congress
- Entrepreneurs' Organisation Learn Around Program
- 23rd World Congress on Intelligent Transport Systems
- Velo-city Congress
- World Parkinson Coalition
- ISHA - The Hip Preservation Society - Annual Scientific Meeting

CONGRESS PLANNING STAGE

At the congress planning stage two key elements stood out:

Alignment with Organizational Mission

By aligning their events to the Association's overall mission and goals, congress planners are ensuring that their event contributes directly to the long term objectives of the Association. The World Down Syndrome Congress consistently puts people with Down syndrome at the heart of their events, thereby supporting their mission to improve quality of life and promote inclusion for people with Down syndrome. Similarly DIY Global, developed the DIY Legacy Project to promote sustainability and responsibility in the DIY industry, aligning with their mission to create a sustainable future.

Intentional Planning for Legacy

A consistent theme across all 8 case studies is the importance of intentional and early planning for legacy. Legacy goals were defined early, often before the event took place, to ensure long-term impacts were achieved. For example, the ITS World Congress in Melbourne had clear objectives about showcasing the local industry, engaging with the

government, and involving the community from the beginning. This strategic planning ensured that the legacy was not just an afterthought but a central part of the event's design.

In several congresses, pre-congress activities were initiated to launch legacy development efforts. The World Parkinson Coalition, for instance, conducted training sessions for local service industry staff to enhance their awareness and understanding of Parkinson's disease. This equipped them with the knowledge to offer a warm and supportive welcome to delegates, and indeed future travellers with movement disorders. The ISHA Annual Scientific Meeting, recognizing the need for collaboration between clinicians and industry partners, hosted Africa Day to bring the two groups together to find solutions to the challenges facing the African continent in their field. One of the strongest examples of intentional planning is the pre-congress undertaking of the Copenhagen Legacy Lab and its 7 step process by DIY Global which provided a direction and focus to create a long lasting legacy from the annual Global DIY Summit.



DURING THE CONGRESS

Each of the 8 case studies initiated a number of activities throughout each event, which contributed to legacy development and outcomes.

Knowledge Sharing

Congresses are powerful platforms for sharing knowledge, best practices and building lasting communities. Knowledge exchange is therefore at the very heart of all 8 case studies. The World Parkinson Coalition, by involving people with Parkinson's, caregivers, researchers, and non-profits, creates, through its congresses, a comprehensive platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange which helps direct research towards patient prioritized issues. The Velo-city Congress focuses on knowledge and policy transfer, bringing together various stakeholders each year to discuss and implement best practices in cycling and sustainable transport. The ISHA Annual Scientific Meeting when held in Cape Town focused on addressing local healthcare needs by educating professionals and building local capacity.

Stakeholder Engagement

Engaging with local communities and relevant stakeholders is critical for successful legacy outcomes. The European Respiratory Society (ERS) International Congress engages with diverse groups of stakeholders, including patient groups, healthcare professionals and politicians, to promote lung health initiatives. Velo-city purposefully reaches out to all relevant stakeholders, including policy decision makers, cycling advocates, associations, academics, governments and civil society to ensure its congress is providing a strong platform for the different groups to engage. Their annual bike parade is a great example of engagement with the public and raising the awareness of the benefits of cycling. ITS Australia engaged with schools giving a voice to young people, and organised

Open Days to engage the public in conversations about how the transport network in Melbourne can become more efficient and sustainable, leading to societal improvement.

Stakeholder engagement that extends beyond the event through continued local action and awareness is essential for sustainable legacy outcomes and we can see this in several of the case studies. ITS Australia's success in engaging with government kickstarted investment into the sector by government; the involvement of individuals with Down syndrome, not only as attendees but as active participants, provided them with a platform to share their experiences and advocate for their rights.

Local Partnerships

Congress organizers are working closely with local partners to enrich their program. Working with the local DMO can positively impact legacy outcomes, demonstrated by DIY Global and the Copenhagen Convention Bureau particularly, but also with WDSC where the Glasgow Convention Bureau was instrumental in the organisation and delivery of the Parkinson's Disease awareness workshops.

Entrepreneurs' Organisation (EO) relies on partnerships with local businesses and destination management companies to create authentic and immersive learning experiences in the destinations they visit. The visit to Philippi Village when in Cape Town, a local hub for diverse entrepreneurs and small business owners, is a case in point.

Working in partnership with local media was mentioned several times in the case studies. A strong coordinated media campaign by ITS Australia resulted in considerable coverage of a sector that was previously hidden in a back cupboard. Leveraging the local media in the host destination is hugely important

to Velo-city who uses it to influence those who are unfamiliar with cycling to offer a more balanced perspective.

Inclusion

Fostering inclusivity is crucial for creating meaningful legacy outcomes and this is clearly visible across the 8 case studies. Both the European Respiratory Society (ERS) and the Hip Preservation Society made efforts to include women, youth and patient organizations in their congresses through dedicated sessions and inclusive networking opportunities. Recognizing the need to inspire the next generation, ITS Australia purposefully planned a number of activities aimed at engaging students and young professionals. Similarly, Velo-city actively promotes inclusion and gender equality in the cycling sector ensuring diverse voices were heard and underrepresented groups supported.

Opportunities for Growth and Development

Congresses provide opportunities for industry and/or sector growth and development. A strong example of this was the resulting industry growth and development following the ITS 2016 World Congress. Local ITS members were overwhelmingly positive about business opportunities that materialized on the trade floor; the investment of Bosch into local talent helped drive innovation and recognition of that talent. New collaborations were formed including an MOU between Australia and California.

In all case studies delegates were able to experience the local culture of the host destination generating business for local organizations and raising the potential for return visits as leisure and business tourists.

Advocacy And Policy Influence

Congresses can drive long-term change by influencing policy and advocacy efforts. Engaging directly with policymakers and using events as platforms for advocacy can ensure that

the event's impact resonates far beyond the closing day. The ERS International Congress, through its Healthy Lungs for Life Campaign, uses its congress platform to advocate for clean air legislation and impact public policy as we saw in their Milan Congress.

ITS Australia in 2016 used the pre-conference High-level Policy Roundtable to build interest in the ITS sector at ministerial level resulting in sector investment. World Parkinson Congress classes all its conference delegates as advocates and challenges them to act thereby planting a seed, which creates a platform for activism.

Sustainability

Incorporating sustainability into event planning can create lasting legacies and we can see, from all 8 case studies, efforts to deliver sustainable events. Events that are mindful of their environmental and social impact not only contribute positively to their communities but also set a precedent for future events.

An example is ERS who focussed on reducing their environmental footprint through various measures including the provision for online attendance, implementation of staff policies that favour environmentally conscious travel options and eliminating single use plastics. Collaboration with venues to implement sustainable practices was also deemed important.

The choice of destination can often be influenced by the levels of understanding and commitments to sustainability by different regions in the world. Copenhagen, recognized as a leading destination in sustainability, provided the perfect backdrop of the 2022 Global DIY Summit and enabled DIY Global to drive its sustainability forward. Planning in other cities can be more challenging.



POST CONGRESS

Measurement and longer term evaluation

Evaluating the long term impact of an event and its legacy initiatives is important but also challenging, due to the long term nature of legacy impacts. We can see from the 8 case studies that efforts have been made to measure and report on the outcomes of their respective legacy activities.

Participant feedback and evaluation is a common mechanism to measure the success of legacy initiatives. WDSC, Global DIY Summit, EO Learn Around Program all use this practise. DIY Global conducts an annual survey to track the progress towards sustainability in the industry and publishes an Annual Sustainability Trend Report which, in 2023, also included DEI initiatives.

The Glasgow Convention Bureau, 5 years later, revisited the 2018 WDSC to assess its long term impact.

Follow up and continuation of Initiatives

Legacy does not end once the conference has departed the destination. Ensuring that initiatives continue to be supported and developed after the event helps maintain momentum and delivers

long-term benefits. The continuation of the Healthy Lungs for Life Campaign beyond the ERS Congress and the ongoing initiatives by the World Parkinson Coalition to raise awareness and foster collaboration highlight the need for sustained efforts post-event. The formation of the regional group, MEAFT, following ISHA's Annual Scientific Meeting in Cape Town, has given ISHA a mechanism to take initiatives forward and continue the legacy journey.

Destination Showcasing

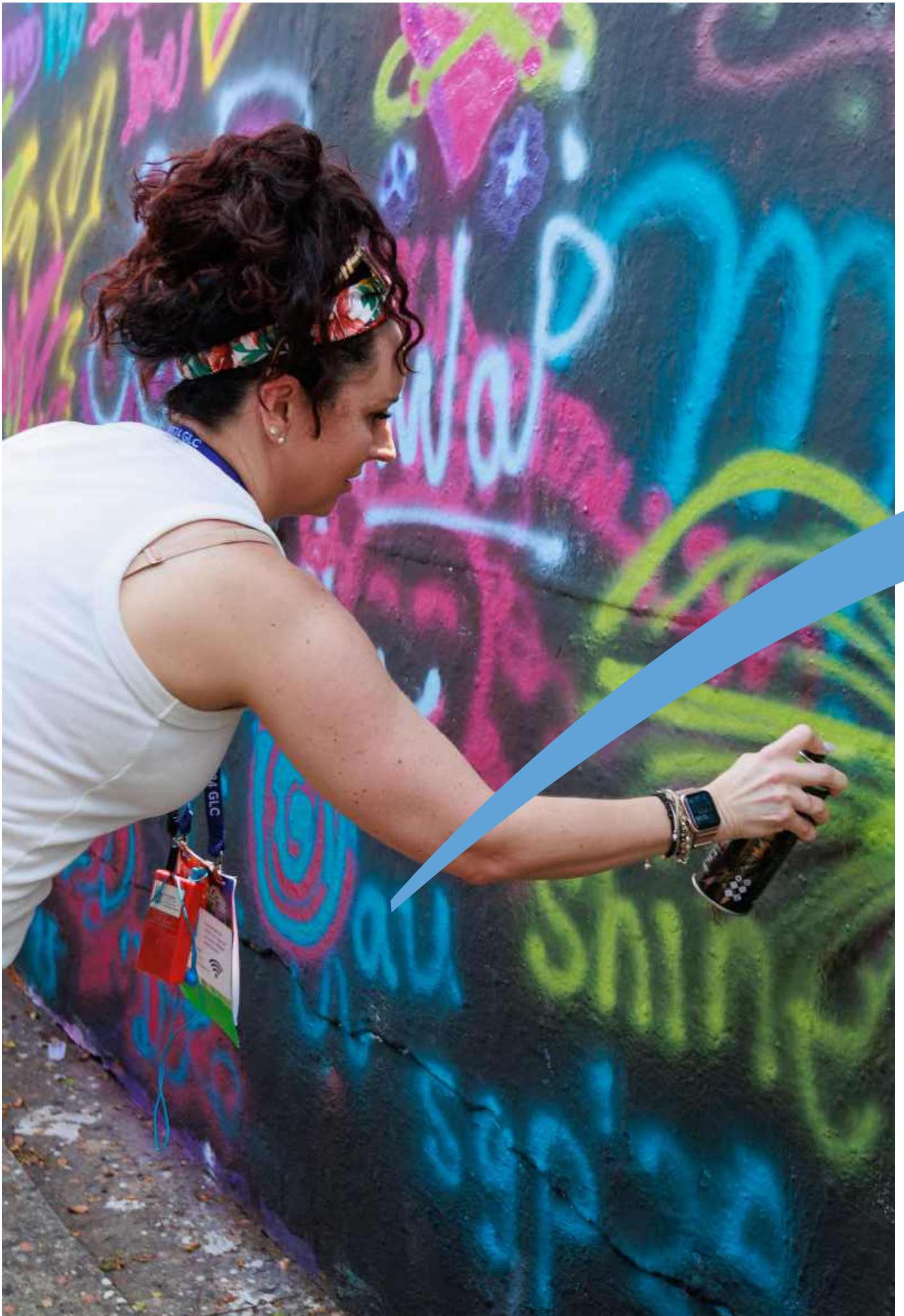
Hosting international congresses is a powerful way for destinations to demonstrate their expertise in key sectors to international audiences and, as in the case of ITS 2016, to local and national governments. It is also an opportunity to showcase the culture of the host destination, promoting it as a place to live, work or visit. Cape Town local culture was cleverly highlighted by EO incorporating visits to iconic attractions as part of their diverse learning experiences. Velo-city's annual bike parade and the provision of guided bike tours around the city to showcase the host city's latest cycling developments are two additional great examples.



TOP TIPS

Organisers of all 8 congresses were asked for their top three recommendations for congress planners looking to incorporate legacy into their events. A summary of these recommendations provided the following top tips.

- **Start Early** – many of our interviewees emphasize the importance of planning for legacy from the very beginning of event planning. Understand what your purpose as an organization is. A purpose that resonates with leadership and membership becomes easier to explain and get the buy in. An intentional approach allows for better integration of legacy initiatives into the overall event strategy.
- **Clear Mission and Objectives** – Define a strong clear mission with well-defined objectives to guide your legacy activities. This also helps to ensure that all stakeholders are aligned and working towards common goals.
- **Listen to Locals** – many of the recommendations stress the importance of engaging with local stakeholders, understanding their priorities, and tailoring events to the specific needs of the host community. You really need to understand from the people on the ground what impact looks like.
- **Inclusive Approach** – there is a strong emphasis on involving diverse stakeholders, including those who might not traditionally be considered supporters to your cause. Make sure the event is fully accessible for all the different types of stakeholders who are there to learn and provide the support that they need to participate fully. This inclusive approach helps build stronger networks and more comprehensive legacy outcomes.
- **Incremental Progress** – several recommendations suggest taking small steps rather than attempting large-scale changes all at once. This approach allows for more manageable and sustainable legacy initiatives.
- **Measurement and Feedback** – establishing measurement criteria early in the planning process and continuously gathering feedback are highlighted as important for assessing and improving legacy outcomes.
- **Cultural Sensitivity** – working across different cultures requires adaptability and sensitivity to local contexts. For organisations aiming to work internationally, culture really matters.
- **Engagement and Experience** – create an engaging and enjoyable atmosphere for participants by making the event fun and exciting, in order to leave a lasting impact.
- **Immersive Learning** – designing hands-on activities and real-world applications can create more memorable and impactful experiences.
- **Community Building** – cross pollination of the community is paramount to building alliances in the community and breaking stakeholders out of their silos. Those who do not buy into the “cross-pollination” model, will either eventually come around or leave the space making room for up and coming leaders who embrace the inclusionary model of scientific meetings.



In summary, the BestCities Case Studies Collection highlights the growing emphasis on congresses driving long-term impact, focusing on aligning events with organisational missions and intentional legacy planning. Key insights from the eight case studies include the importance of stakeholder engagement, knowledge sharing, and local partnerships. Inclusive approaches,

sustainability, and post-congress initiatives are also vital for lasting legacies. Organisers emphasise early planning, clear objectives, and cultural sensitivity as essential strategies for creating meaningful, measurable legacies that benefit industries and communities.



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