



November 30, 2018

## **Cities in Sync wins TIAC Marriott International Innovator of the Year Award**

**OTTAWA, ON** – Cities in Sync partners Destination Greater Victoria, Tourism Saskatoon and Destination St. John's won the 2018 Marriott International Innovator of the Year Award at the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) annual Canadian Tourism Awards in Ottawa this week. Established in 2017, Cities in Sync is a "one stop shop" for meeting and conference planners to book all three cities in a three-year or four-year rotation in an efficient and competitive manner.

"Winning this award is a great achievement for Greater Victoria" said Paul Nurse, CEO of Destination Greater Victoria. "A partnership like Cities in Sync is a strong tool for Destination Greater Victoria to meet or exceed its revenue targets for the Victoria Conference Centre and creates a positive economic impact for our members. It is only in the last five years that we have really put an emphasis on the meetings business and we are seeing the rewards. Congratulations to Destination Greater Victoria Vice President Miranda Ji on this win as well."

"Cities in Sync has been a great vehicle to bring conferences to Saskatoon" said Todd Brandt, President and CEO of Tourism Saskatoon. "Since Cities in Sync's creation in 2017 Tourism Saskatoon has been able to produce eight additional in-market activities. We look forward to continuing this success with our Cities in Sync partners."

"Partnerships between destinations allows for broader marketing initiatives and increased business opportunities" said Cathy Duke, CEO of Destination St. John's. "We are very excited about our partnership in Cities in Sync, which has brought new meetings and convention business to St. John's and has allowed us to showcase our destination to a wider audience."

Cities in Sync is the first agreement of its kind in Canada. Convention business regularly rotates geographically across the country. This partnership allows Greater Victoria, Saskatoon and St. John's to receive a significant portion of this business, as well as having a presence at industry events such as trade shows. This occurs utilizing efficient investments by leveraging and pooling resources.

A meeting or conference planner working through Cities in Sync is expected to book an event into each of the three cities in their upcoming meeting cycle. The primary benefit for the planner is the ease of bookings for multiple years, as well as financial incentives provided by each destination and being a "one stop shop" for requests for proposals information. The planner can save time by sending their request to one person and receive a joint proposal from all three destinations. The cities can be booked in any order.

Cities in Sync increases the profile of the destinations and furthers their brands. A destination hosting in year three or year four can market itself at conferences earlier in the cycle. This creates brand awareness and trade show presence where none may have existed before, thereby having a greater likelihood of higher visitor attendance and economic impact. Research demonstrates that a meeting or conference delegate spends up to four times as much as a leisure visitor in the local economy.



This is the latest high-profile award for Greater Victoria as a meetings destination. In 2017 Greater Victoria was named a top ten emerging meetings destination by Smart Meetings magazine. Earlier this year Skift also named Greater Victoria in an article covering the rise of mid-sized destinations innovating in the meetings and conferences space.

The Canadian Tourism Awards are the definitive national tourism awards event. They are held annually with awards handed out in 13 categories.

Information on Cities in Sync can be found [here](#).

Information on the Tourism Industry of Canada (TIAC) Awards can be found [here](#).

**Destination Greater Victoria** (Greater Victoria Visitors and Convention Bureau) is the official, not-for-profit destination marketing organization working in partnership with nearly 1,000 businesses and municipalities in Greater Victoria.

**Tourism Saskatoon** is a membership-based, non-profit visitor and convention bureau marketing Saskatoon and region as a destination of choice for leisure and business travel. Services include convention and events attraction, media relations, membership services, and advocacy. Tourism Saskatoon is proud to be an internationally accredited destination marketing organization. A place of unexpected surprise and discovery, Saskatoon provides visitors from near and far with the opportunity to experience the unforgettable. Where prairie skies meet urban parkland, Saskatoon is host to unique and captivating events, attractions and natural treasures, just waiting to be explored. With an open heart and vibrant energy, Saskatoon welcomes the world. For more information, visit [www.tourismsaskatoon.com](http://www.tourismsaskatoon.com).

**Destination St. John's** (DSJ) is a not-for-profit destination marketing organization selling tourism partners' products, services and experiences to the world. It currently targets major meetings, conventions and incentive travel (MC&IT); sport and cultural events, leisure travel and group tours.

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