



DGV WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR GLOBAL IMPACT ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Global trade association for destination organizations to honour DGV at annual convention in Texas

VICTORIA, B.C. (June 16, 2023) – Destinations International, the global trade association for destination organizations, today announced that Destination Greater Victoria (DGV) is the winner of its Destination Organization Award for Global Impact. The prestigious award is for the significant contributions DGV has made to the travel and tourism industry over the past four years, most notably through its co-founding, financial investment, and organizational commitment of the annual IMPACT Sustainability Travel and Tourism Conference (IMPACT) in Victoria.

Destinations International, whose membership includes over 600 organizations and almost 6,000 professionals from around the globe, will present the award at the opening session of its annual convention in Dallas, Texas on July 18.

“I want to congratulate our entire DGV team, the municipalities and member businesses that support us, and our IMPACT conference partners for this important recognition,” said Paul Nursey, CEO, Destination Greater Victoria. “DGV is committed to authentically aligning our operations and sector with the values of the communities we serve, and our sector’s impressive recovery from the pandemic demonstrates that sustainability and commercial success can be achieved concurrently.”

A key component of the award criteria is that destination organizations must have identified, implemented, and contributed a solution to a local challenge or opportunity that is scalable to other destinations from a global standpoint. IMPACT is now being licensed around the world through the IMPACT Sustainability Travel & Tourism Event Series - Local, Regional and National.

At a time when sustainability was only starting to emerge as an important topic in North America, Destination Greater Victoria made a strategic choice to align its business strategy to the community value of sustainability in 2016. DGV took leadership in making destination sustainability actionable, realistic, tangible, and good for business through the creation of IMPACT in 2018. While founded in partnership with Synergy Enterprises, Tartan Bond, and Starrboard Enterprises, DGV invested the risk capital, backstopped the conference financially, and brought considerable human capital and resources of the organization to the effort.

Today, IMPACT attracts approximately 300 delegates from North America and around the world, with a mission to drive, inspire and demonstrate innovative and collaborative sustainable solutions for positive tourism development. IMPACT attendees include private business operators, DMOs, government officials, clean tech solutions providers, indigenous tourism leaders and research and academia. With the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada and Tourism and Travel Research Association serving as event co-chairs, IMPACT also ensures valuable research and data, and the voices of Indigenous peoples play an integral role in all conference activities.

After five in-person conferences and one virtual conference, IMPACT has proven itself to be an important gathering that stimulates change in Greater Victoria, across Canada and abroad. Through IMPACT, DGV and its partners have stimulated conversations in a safe environment, and made what is often an intimidating topic accessible, practical, and actionable for delegates in their home

communities. IMPACT has also benefited the entire travel and tourism industry by producing an annual conference proceedings paper that has influenced dozens of destination organizations' strategies directly and indirectly. Locally, the conference also generates over \$600,000 to the visitor economy in the depths of the off-peak season.

"The world of destination marketing and management is completely different than it was just a few years ago," said Don Welsh, President and CEO & Foundation Executive Director, Destinations International. "Tourism leaders worldwide are facing an ever-changing landscape of destination issues, which is challenging us to reimagine the work we do. Paul Nursey and his team began that process years ago by closely aligning their goals and operations with the values of the communities they serve. They've been incredibly successful, and through IMPACT, they continue to generously share their insights and foster collaboration among our members so we can learn from each other and redefine best practices in destination management."

Since launching IMPACT, DGV has continued to incrementally build out a substantive sustainability program by becoming a carbon neutral and now carbon positive organization, implementing a Sustainability Advisory Committee as part of its governance structure, helping build off-peak season revenue so members could re-invest into sustainability projects that require significant capex, and most recently becoming the first urban destination in Canada or the United States to achieve Biosphere accreditation.

A measure of DGV's success in aligning its business and sustainability goals with local community values is recent resident surveys showing tourism is supported by over 97 per cent of residents, a seven per cent increase since 2018. What's next for DGV? Watch for a circular economy strategy at scale in an urban destination.

About Destinations International

Destinations International is the world's largest resource for official destination organizations, convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs) and tourism boards. Destinations International is about serving destination marketing professionals first and foremost. For more information, visit <http://www.destinationsinternational.org>.

About Destination Greater Victoria

Destination Greater Victoria (DGV) is a Biosphere certified, climate positive destination marketing organization (DMO) that has helped Greater Victoria grow to become one of the world's most popular destinations, with a visitor economy contributing \$2.3 billion annually to the local economy. DGV inspires the world to experience Greater Victoria's natural beauty, attractions, accommodations, Indigenous culture, culinary offerings, vibrant arts scene, and welcoming hospitality, while providing governments, member businesses, travellers, meeting organizers, sports organizers, and other tourism stakeholders with a wide array of services and programs. For more information, please visit our [website](#).

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