

Shanghai gears up for UFI's 83rd Global Congress: The Exhibition Industry in Transformation

Paris, 6 October 2016 – UFI's Global Congress, the most international gathering of leaders from the exhibition industry, is set to support and inspire events professionals from more than 40 countries on 9-12 November in Shanghai. CEOs, young leaders, and international experts will show how businesses can thrive in today's fast-changing exhibition industry environment.

Hosted by the Shanghai Convention and Exhibition Industries Association (SCEIA) at the National Exhibition and Convention Centre in Shanghai, the prestigious four-day event is open to UFI members from around the world.

"UFI's annual Congress is always a hugely valuable event for the global exhibition industry as we tackle the issues that will define our industry's future. But what's so outstanding this year is that we can expand sessions and networking opportunities", says UFI President Sergey Alexeev. "Also, as we want to discuss what will change, we will listen to the next generation's ideas for our industry, as our "Next Generation Leaders" Grantees take to the stage."

Riding the waves of change

The Congress, entitled "Ripples – The Exhibition Industry in Transformation", comes at a time of uncertainty for many people in the exhibition industry, faced with factors such as digitalisation, political insecurity, and shifting global economic power.

Keynote speaker Ayesha Khanna, Smart Cities and Education Strategy Expert, and Founder of the Hybrid Reality Institute, will call on delegates to "ride the waves of change". "Why is the exhibition industry successful?", she says. "Because it delivers on a promise: the promise of a successful marketplace. Buyers trust us to find the right sellers, sellers trust us to bring in the right buyers."

The five young winners of the 2016 UFI Next Generation Leaders Grant - from Germany, India Iran, Qatar and the US - will also take to the stage. They will "Break the rules", and share their visions of the future of the exhibition industry.

Ever more flexible programme

This year's flexible event format means each delegate can choose to follow either the "Strategy Track", with expert analysis of digitalisation and visitor expectations, or focus on the "Operations Track", looking at exhibitor engagement, and questions of health, safety and security.

Within the framework of the "Special Interest Group" sessions, Congress delegates can themselves dive deep into topics that drive their business – be it venue development and management, HR, or digital disruption.

As an example of these, a top level venue panel, featuring Corrado Peraboni (CEO Fiera Milano), René Kamm (CEO MCH Group), Cliff Wallace (Chairman, New World (Shenyang) Property Development Limited Expo Branch Company) and Deutsche Messe AG's Andreas Gruchow, will debate Models for large venue management for the future.

In parallel, focussing on staff retention, top HR managers like Richard Lowther (Reed Exhibitions), and Joost van de Kamp (Jaarbeurs) will discuss findings and insights from a recent UFI survey on the topic.

2016 also is the year where the big players of our industry are going digital and collaborating with leaders of the digital economy. In Shanghai, the spotlight will be on the most prominent collaboration in our industry: the one between UBM and Alibaba, as Jimé Essink (President & CEO, UBM Asia Ltd) will, for the first time, give insights into the collaboration, one year after it was announced.

Adding to these sessions, the UFI Congress will welcome back jwc President & CEO Jochen Witt for his annual "state of the industry" talk. In 2015, his talk was the highest rated session at the Annual Congress in Milan.

Closing two intense days of sessions, Tim Cobbold (CEO, UBM), Michael Kruppe (GM, SNIEC), and Jason Popp (EVP Intl, GES) will discuss how organisers, venues, and service providers find their balance in collaborating while competing against the backdrop of technological and legal changes in our industry.

Expanded best practice sharing and networking opportunities

Renowned for its valuable networking opportunities, UFI's Congress enables exhibition colleagues to share best practices from around the globe. This year, two new UFI Xchange sessions on EventTech and Destinations will take place prior to the main Congress.

The Congress also features the 2016 UFI Award ceremony celebrating the most outstanding best practices of our industry in the fields of Education, Marketing, Technology and Sustainable Development. The Award winners will present their winning entries in a special best practice session during the Congress.

To make networking even easier, UFI is also introducing a special lounge area for delegates to have all the small chats and meetings that help them to bring their businesses forward, as the UFI Congress is traditionally also the place where industry deals are prepared or even closed.

UFI world meetings

In addition to the main programme, the Congress will host various UFI meetings. These include the UFI Board of Directors Meeting, the UFI annual General Assembly, the UFI CEO Think Tank, and meetings of UFI Regional Chapters, the UFI Associations' Committee and the UFI Marketing Committee. The end of the Congress will see the handover of the UFI Presidency from Sergey Alexeev to Andreas Gruchow.

As well as UFI's Diamond Sponsors; Indonesia Convention Exhibition (ICE), Global Experience Specialists (GES) and the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), we thank the Congress Gold Sponsor, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA) for their generous support.

Additional information as well as registration is available at www.ufievent.org/shanghai/en/

About UFI - The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry UFI is the leading global association of the world's tradeshow organisers and exhibition centre operators, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations, and selected partners of the exhibition industry. UFI's main goal is to represent, promote and support the business interests of its members and the exhibition industry. UFI directly represents around 50,000 exhibition industry employees globally, and also works closely with its 55 national and regional association members. 700 member organisations in 83 countries around the world are presently signed up as members. Over 900 international trade fairs proudly bear the UFI approved label, a quality guarantee for visitors and exhibitors alike. UFI members continue to provide the international business community with a unique marketing media aimed at developing outstanding face-to-face business opportunities.

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