

UFI's 2019 European Conference to focus on the future for exhibition organisers

- Birmingham (UK) to host UFI's main European event of 2019 from 15 - 17 May

Paris, 22 January 2019 – UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, invites all exhibition professionals to join the 2019 UFI European Conference, which will take place in Birmingham (UK) from May 15-17. Registration for the event is now open.

Under the theme “The Organisers’ Future”, the conference will focus on what is in store for organisers in Europe and beyond. Bringing together the exhibition community from all across Europe, it will continue the debate from last year where over 220 exhibition industry professionals from 35 countries attended the conference in Verona (Italy).

The Conference will cover global opportunities from a European perspective, including sessions on the USA, China and Russia. Trade wars and a turbulent global economic outlook mean organisers need to remain flexible and pragmatic in running and planning their businesses, while the rewards for those who do grow overseas can be great.

It will also look at issues raised last time in Verona, such as how the basic business model for organising exhibitions is changing due to the effects of digital/AI, the evolution of the exhibition format, or changing customer needs. The recent UFI/Explori Global Visitors survey released in December 2018 threw up some surprising results which will also be discussed – the study is the largest of its kind, with responses from over 13,000 trade show visitors across the globe.

Lastly, taking place only seven weeks after the nominal date for Brexit, it will be a timely opportunity to examine the UK's position as a home base for leading global exhibition organisers. And whatever the outcome may be on 29 March, it will provide the chance to discuss any ramifications for businesses in the UK, Europe and beyond.

The two-day event provides the opportunity to hear from world-class speakers from our industry and beyond, and also to enjoy first-class networking in a relaxed and informal setting – from the state-of-the-art Vox Conference Centre to the Gala Dinner at the medieval Warwick castle built in 1068.

“Birmingham will be our most important European event this year. It serves a crucial need for exhibition professionals from Europe and further afield to get together, take the pulse of the industry and discuss the issues of the day. The event has enjoyed double-digit growth year on year recently, and we're working hard to deliver value for organisers, venues, and service providers,” says Kai Hattendorf, UFI Managing Director/CEO.

“We also made the decision to take the event to Birmingham after the UK announced its intention to leave the European Union. In this way, participants will be able to have their own, first-hand experience of a post-Brexit Britain, if the country does ultimately leave the Union in March 2019,” Hattendorf adds.

As with every year, UFI's working groups will schedule activities around the European Conference, and UFI's Executive Committee and Board of Directors will hold regular meetings.

For more information and registration details, please visit www.ufi.org/birmingham2019. Early bird rates are available until 15 March.

The UFI European Conference takes place in May each year. It has previously been hosted in Verona (2018), Cologne (2017), Basel (2016), and Istanbul (2015), and is open to UFI members and non-members. Based on data from Explori, a global UFI research partner, participants regularly rate this unique conference as one of the very best opportunities for networking and best-practice learning in the industry.

UFI has scheduled three regional conferences for 2019: for Asia/Pacific in Tokyo (March 14-15), for Middle East/Africa in Dubai (April 8-9), and for Europe in Birmingham (May 15-17).

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 58 national and regional association members. More than 780 member organisations in 86 countries around the world are presently signed up as members. Over 1,000 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.

For more information, please contact:

UFI Headquarters
 Monika Fourmeaux-Ceskova, UFI Marketing and Communications Manager
 Email: monika@ufi.org
 Tel: +33 (0) 46 39 75 00
www.ufi.org