

UFI publishes global framework for reopening exhibitions

- The framework is designed to give appropriate authorities confidence to allow exhibitions to reopen based on the assured implementation of agreed health and safety standards.
- It argues that exhibitions are different to other types of large events, and must be prioritised for reopening to kick-start the global economic recovery

Paris, 5 May – UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, today publishes a global framework aimed at the safe and controlled reopening of exhibitions and B2B trade events around the world. The document is intended to become a de facto standard in exchanges with policy makers and authorities around the world.

The framework is put together by a specialist taskforce of partners and industry leaders, whose operational recommendations reflect emerging regulatory conditions around the world. It provides an advocacy narrative on why exhibitions must be prioritised for reopening, which UFI is counting on industry stakeholders to endorse.

All aspects of exhibition design and delivery are accommodated in the framework, ranging from the event environment to a wholesale reconsideration of the customer journey. It sets out to provide governments and health authorities around the world with the information they require to confidently green-light exhibitions once again.

“The ability of associations to lead and help foster discussion and debate across whole industries makes us central to a crisis such as the outbreak of Covid-19,” says UFI President Mary Larkin.

“UFI prides itself on a network of members and partners that sits at the forefront of exhibition industry development, and consequently we have some of the world’s leading authorities working with us on this framework. We hope that the industry comes together in support of this initiative and helps make the framework synonymous with our industry’s recovery.”

The framework is intended as a working document, subject to ongoing input that will be used to provide concrete examples. As a result, the benefit of the framework is not only operational, but political.

The framework includes around 30 items that will ensure that exhibitions can run in a safe environment. It covers areas like personnel and personal safety, physical distancing, increased health and safety regulations, the implementation of crowd control, and the encouragement and enforcement regulations – all before, during, and after the event respectively.

By embracing and promoting the framework, the industry can not only ensure a unified approach to their day-to-day management but engage in re-opening talks with authorities and governments on all levels – the bodies that give licence for exhibitions to take place.

UFI will continue the exchange with organisers, venues, service providers and industry associations to add further input and expand the framework with concrete examples of good practice from around the world. Ongoing dialogue with the industry as a whole will increase both the framework’s efficacy, and the likelihood that stakeholders adhere to its stated health and safety recommendations.

Managing Director and CEO of UFI, Kai Hattendorf, says: “Exhibitions are distinct from other large events. Crowd management, visitor flow and adherence to operational protocols can be tightly managed. A strong framework provides a compelling case for the recommencement and continuation of this vital industry.

“By pledging to ensure the health and safety of all exhibition participants, tradeshows can resume their rightful place as a proven fast track to trade and market recovery.”

For more information on the framework, visit www.ufi.org/coronavirus.

The framework will be at the forefront of UFI’s Global Exhibitions Day activity this year, and the association will be advocating the role of exhibitions to kick start national economies. For more on GED 2020 and the GED lobbying campaign, click here: www.ufi.org/ged.

The following organisations have been part of the task force to prepare and agree this framework, which is a global representation of the exhibition industry.

Exhibition organisers

Clarion Events, Informa Markets, Reed Exhibitions, Tarsus Group

Organisers and venues

Corferias, Dubai World Trade Centre, Fira de Barcelona, GL events, Koelnmesse, La Rural, Grupa MTP, RAI Amsterdam

Exhibition venues

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Johannesburg Expo Centre, MGM Resorts International, Shanghai New International Exhibition Centre, Shenzhen World Exhibition & Convention Centre, The NEC

Associations

AEO – Association of Event Organisers, AEV – Association of Event Venues, AFIDA – Asociacion Internacional de Ferias America, AUMA – Association of the German Trade Fair Industry, EEIA – European Exhibition Industry Alliance, ESSA – Event Supplier and Services Association, IELA – International Exhibition Logistics Association, IFES – International Federation of Exhibition & Event Services, SISO – Society of Independent Show Organisers and TCEB – Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau

Service providers/general contractors

Freeman, GES and GL events

***About UFI – The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry:** UFI is the global trade 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 more than 50,000 exhibition industry employees globally, and also works closely with its 60 national and regional association members. More than 800 member organisations in 89 countries around the world are presently signed up as members. Around 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.*

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