

UFI and SISO call for “Testing over Quarantine” policies to keep businesses going

Paris/Atlanta – 8 October 2020: UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, and SISO, the Society for Independent Show Organizers, today call on policymaker and governments around the world to empower the best policy solutions to maintain the flow of people, products, and services - and in doing so, to activate the potentials of rapid antigen COVID tests.

The statement, signed by UFI President Mary Larkin (President Diversified Communications, USA) and SISO Chair Doug Emslie (Group Chief Executive, Tarsus Group), reads:

“Around the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has already caused a global recession unlike anything we have seen in generations. Going forward, and until the global community has developed and rolled out vaccination programmes, we have to find the best solutions possible to maintain the flow of people, products, and services. This is needed to stabilize business, to avoid economic hardships for citizens around the world as government support programmes are being scaled back over time.

The exhibitions industry possesses one of the critical skills for any economic recovery: It sets up and operates the market places and meeting places for industries and communities to meet for business. Trade shows and exhibitions are organised events, as recognized by the WHO and governments. They are not unorganized mass gatherings. In recent months, hundreds of trade shows have taken place, predominantly in Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, with health and safety measures in place, based on global industry standards and aligned with local regulations. **Not one of them has caused a COVID outbreak.**

At the same time, hundreds of relevant trade shows have to be cancelled or postponed, as buyers and sellers cannot plan to attend, primarily due to travel restrictions and fast changing quarantine regulations. For economies to recover, for sectors to restart, the business community needs clarity and reliable regulations for the coming months.

Rapid antigen COVID tests are reliable and becoming widely available. These Rapid Tests provide the best solution for creating a safe environment to hold managed business events. We call on governments and authorities to follow a “testing before quarantine” approach for business related travel and activities.

Rapid testing can be applied pre- and post-flight, and at the check in points for events – replacing the need for people to quarantine if tests are negative. Combined with the existing safety measures around events, this will create a safe and reliable framework for business professionals to engage, and can overcome the current impasse that is causing additional economic damage every day.

As a sector, we stand ready to implement rapid testing processed around our organised events. We ask governments and authorities to work with our sector, to activate our knowledge and expertise, to make sure businesses can meet and do business throughout the current pandemic.”

***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 88 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.*

For more information, please contact: UFI Headquarters: Email: media@ufi.org Tel: +33 (0)1 46 39 75 00 or www.ufi.org

About SISO: SISO members include companies, corporations and other for-profit entities that own, produce or provide full-service management of “face to face” trade shows, consumer shows, expositions, conferences and events. SISO membership is a combination of large corporations and small entrepreneurial enterprises that do business around the world. SISO’s almost 200-member companies produce thousands of events around the world. SISO’s Mission, is to meet the common needs of our members, by providing peer networking opportunities, education, industry information, streamlined business processes and best practices in the industry.

For more information, please visit: www.SISO.org or contact David Audrain, SISO Executive Director, at +1-404-334-4585 or David@SISO.org