

Around 100 exhibitors and sponsors from all over the globe attend a virtual site visit at ICE Kraków

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Site visits are an essential element of preparations for any major event and serve as a prelude to the congress or conference. They are an opportunity for planners and organisers to get to know the venue, explore its capacity and technical specification, meet the team and ask any pressing questions. This is especially important when the event is to be held at the given venue for the first time.

Due to the pandemic and the resulting travel restrictions, organisers of many international events due to be held in Kraków in the coming months have been unable to attend site visits, which in turn means they have been forced to postpone their event. In anticipation of the EAACI (European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology) Congress, due to be held at the ICE Kraków Congress Centre in July, the venue's operator KBF and technological partner CMA have organised a virtual site visit for almost 100 exhibitors and sponsors from all over the globe, allowing them to take a close look at all rooms and spaces of ICE Kraków and ask questions about specific issues and gain answers in real time.

ICE Kraków looks like a spectacular, spacious and contemporary venue which will allow EAACI, event participants and industry sponsors to educate and disseminate essential information on allergology and clinical immunology. The virtual site visit was the perfect platform showing industry sponsors the exact functionality we will have at our disposal at ICE Kraków later this year, says William McCrea, General Manager of EAACI.

Holding virtual site visits allows us to present ourselves as a venue which has transformed the restrictions imposed by the pandemic into innovation in terms of presentation and hosting in the coming years.

We should see holding virtual site visits as an opportunity. The pandemic has forced us to seek new solutions and use technology as a sales tool while travel is impossible. It's a perfect example of our progressive attitude towards a difficult situation, confirming ICE Kraków to be a highly specialist venue, says Paula Fanderowska, Deputy Director of KBF for the ICE Kraków Congress Centre.

According to the report "Meetings Industry in Kraków", in 2019, before the outbreak of the pandemic, the city hosted over 8400 events, two-thirds of which were conferences and congresses. Research conducted by Tourism Economics reveals it will take the events industry around two years to return to similar numbers of events, so virtual site visits will continue to be an essential tool promoting conference venues to organisers from all over the globe.

Holding virtual site visits is likely to become a permanent feature. Kraków is an innovative, creative and technologically-advanced city attracting event planners and organisers from all over the globe. Despite the pandemic, our convenient location, excellent infrastructure, R&D capabilities and human and cultural potential make Kraków an attractive city for all kinds of events. As operator of the ICE Kraków Congress Centre, KBF continues to invest in and work on developing the business tourism sector in Poland, says Izabela Błaszczuk, Director of KBF.