

Explore Edmonton receives results from Global Destination Sustainability Index

Edmonton - Explore Edmonton has received results from its first ever Global Destination Sustainability Index submission, which benchmarks destinations for responsible and regenerative tourism.

Explore Edmonton joined the GDS-I in August, as sustainability is one of the four pillars of excellence that the corporation has identified it has to do very well to reach its goals for the visitor economy and as a venue management leader.

Explore Edmonton scored well in a number of categories, but as expected has room for growth in others. Edmonton ranked at 51 per cent overall, which puts the city second in North America, but only four cities on the continent participated. For the fifth year in a row, the number one city was Gothenburg, Sweden which scored 89 per cent.

Edmonton's top result came in social performance, which asks 13 questions to rate the city's integration of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, social progress, health and wellness, and inclusive infrastructure. It's a comprehensive measure of quality of life in a city and Edmonton scored 72.5 out of 100.

Where Edmonton needs the biggest improvement is in supplier performance, scoring 33 per cent. That means that Explore Edmonton needs to improve in helping its partners in the tourism supply chain, like accommodations, restaurants and schools, to integrate best practices for sustainability. But there's good news, as 55 per cent of hotel rooms in the area are sustainability certified already and the corporation is ready to deploy training and collaboration early in 2022.

"Sustainability as one of our pillars of excellence drives our decision making regularly and joining the GDS-Index is another tool to guide us in our business." said Explore Edmonton CEO Traci Bednard. "We wanted to know, on a global scale, where we needed to improve our sustainability efforts and who were global leaders we could learn from. It's a positive step Now that we have those answers, we can take big steps."

Edmonton can look to cities like Lyon, France which improved its score by 42 per cent this year.

"What's exciting is that we're now a part of a huge network that can help us improve," said Melissa Radu, director of social and environmental sustainability at Explore Edmonton. "We can connect with cities like Gothenburg, and Copenhagen, which have historically done well, and find out how we can improve in specific areas. We are very committed at Explore Edmonton to improve this score and with a full team in the sustainability department we think a lot of our goals can be reached."

For the full results, please visit: [2021 Results - GDS-Movement](#)

Director of Social & Environmental Sustainability Melissa Radu is available for one-on-one interviews by request on Thursday, Dec. 2 between 3:00 and 5:00 p.m.

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