

Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework

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Introduction

A more prosperous and sustainable future for Ireland can be achieved where Business Events serve as platforms for advancing economic, social and environmental objectives globally.

Association Conferences catalyse societal advancement and provide fertile ground for innovation and collaboration. Appreciating these interconnected benefits, Ireland has embarked on a journey to harness the potential of Association Conferences and propel future growth and development.

The Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework fosters collaboration and unites stakeholders within the much wider Ireland Inc. Ecosystem, embodying a synergetic strategy to address challenges and seize opportunities. By adopting this approach and employing structured methodologies, Ireland can enhance its value proposition and contribute significantly to societal advancement and sustainable development through Association Conferences.

The term 'impact' signifies the creation of positive outcomes on societal or environmental issues, addressing existing needs and producing benefits beyond immediate economic gains.

Within the industry, long-term impact may be referred to as 'conference legacy' when the organisers or the conference generate tangible, long-term outcomes that outlives the conference itself as the result of deliberate actions and interventions. This approach ensures conferences contribute meaningfully to community and environmental well-being.

How we will catalyse change

The Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework aims to reshape Ireland's Association Conference attraction strategy by enhancing engagement with organisers, conference ambassadors, local committees, and international associations. It ensures that conferences deliver economic benefits while promoting societal advancement and sustainability through:

- Aligning with Government of Ireland priorities and UNSDGs to address global challenges.
- Encouraging economic activity and job creation in local communities, thus delivering positive community impact.
- Enhancing job attractiveness, stability and career focus areas within the industry.
- Enhancing quality of life and well-being through community-focused activities and social impact initiatives.
- Facilitating long-term growth and prosperity for various sectors by capturing and sharing knowledge.
- Implementing and utilising tools to assess and report on the impacts of conferences for continuous improvement.

The success of this Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework will be ensured by the following outputs:

- 1. Strategic alignment:** creating a framework to align conference outcomes with positive impacts on Ireland's economy, community, and environment.
- 2. Stakeholder engagement:** involving local stakeholders and government to ensure the frameworks relevance and effectiveness.
- 3. Measurement framework:** establishing a comprehensive system to assess and report on economic, social, and environmental impacts.

Ireland's Business Events Strategy 2030

Ireland has developed a transformative strategy "Ireland's Business Events Strategy 2030." This strategy has been created through deep collaboration between the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and industry leaders.

The overarching purpose of Ireland's Business Events Strategy 2030 is to set the direction for a collaborative approach to accelerate the development of a world class business events sector and realise the full benefits of business events for Ireland.

Fáilte Ireland is the National Tourism Development Authority for Ireland with the lead responsibility for the Association Conferences segment in Ireland. Its role is to support the long-term sustainable growth of tourism's economic, social, and environmental contribution to Ireland. To achieve this, Fáilte Ireland has adopted the Visitor, Industry, Community and Environment (VICE) model as its guiding principle for sustainable tourism development.

Ireland's Business Events Strategy 2030

Vision

Creating one of the world's most successful Business Events Ecosystems by 2030.

Mission

Enable clear opportunities for transformative economic, social and environmental progress, by responsibly promoting and extending the positive and wide-reaching impact of Business Events on Ireland's broader ecosystem, in line with wider Government of Ireland policies and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Ireland's Business Events Strategy 2030 – Strategic Pillars

The content of the Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework is designed to enable Fáilte Ireland to deliver on the following Strategic pillars as identified by Ireland's Business Events Strategy 2030:

 ECONOMIC	 SOCIAL	 ENVIRONMENTAL
Realising the value of business events.	Contributing to building stronger communities at local, sectoral, and national levels.	Delivering business events that exceed environmental criteria.
• Achieving revenue growth from the business events sector. • Prioritising value over volume in Ireland's business events industry. • Fostering a secure and resilient tourism workforce for sustainable growth.	• Making a positive impact on local host communities. • Delivering longer-term legacy benefits for sectoral communities. • Contributing to achieving national goals and objectives.	• Supporting business events industry to achieve climate goals. • Attracting high value business events through sustainable practices. • Promoting best practice in environmental compliance and resource efficiency.

Association Conferences as Drivers of Impact

Impact builds positive assets for society which enhances value for stakeholders across many dimensions, such as building intellectual capital (shared knowledge), social capital (stronger networks), and economic capital (financial prosperity) amongst others.

To maximise the impact of association conferences, it is essential to adopt a framework that aligns the strategic mission of the International or European association and its activities for value creation in the destination. The association's mission guides the conference's impact focus, while aligning the core outcomes of the conference with broader social and economic development priorities for the region, and national agendas.

The diagram illustrates how conferences can create significant impact by aligning three strategic priorities.

1. The association's mission and objectives for its sector and greater community.
2. Local or sectoral community needs and gaps.
3. Societal and environmental development priorities within the destination.

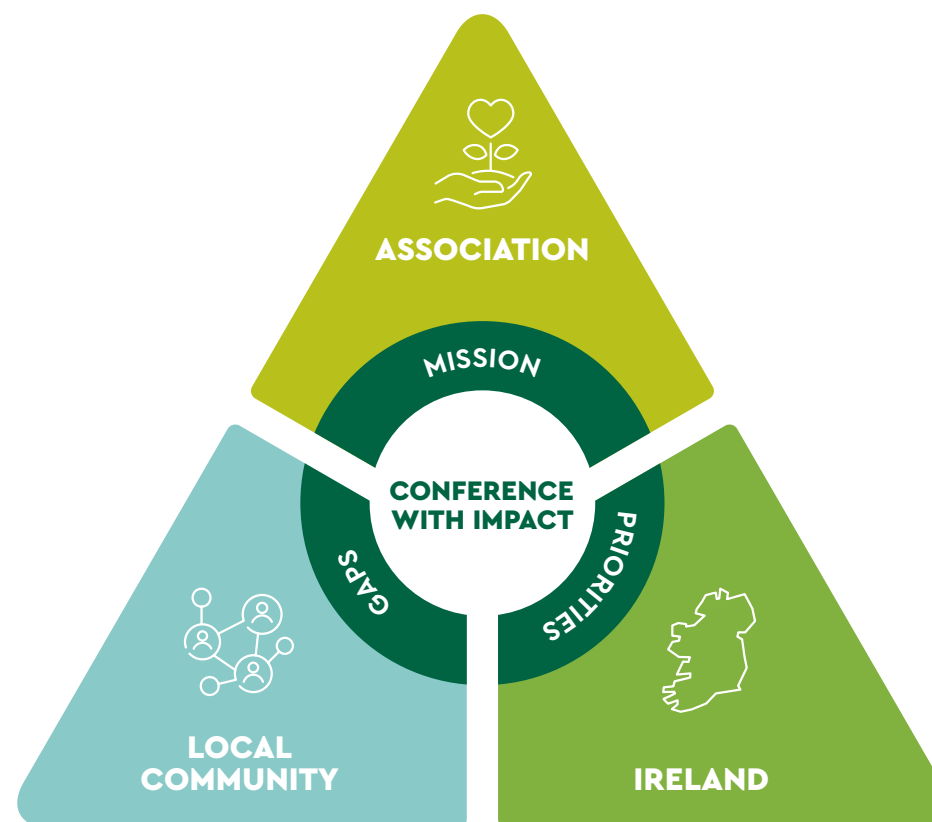


Figure 1: Aligning Strategic Priorities

Alignment with Government of Ireland

Fáilte Ireland embraces a 'Whole of Government' approach to support Ireland's national priorities and Ireland's Business Events Strategy 2030.

The Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework aligns with key Government of Ireland strategies including Global Ireland 2025, the Trade and Investment Strategy, and the Climate Action Plan by focusing on economic goals and sustainability.

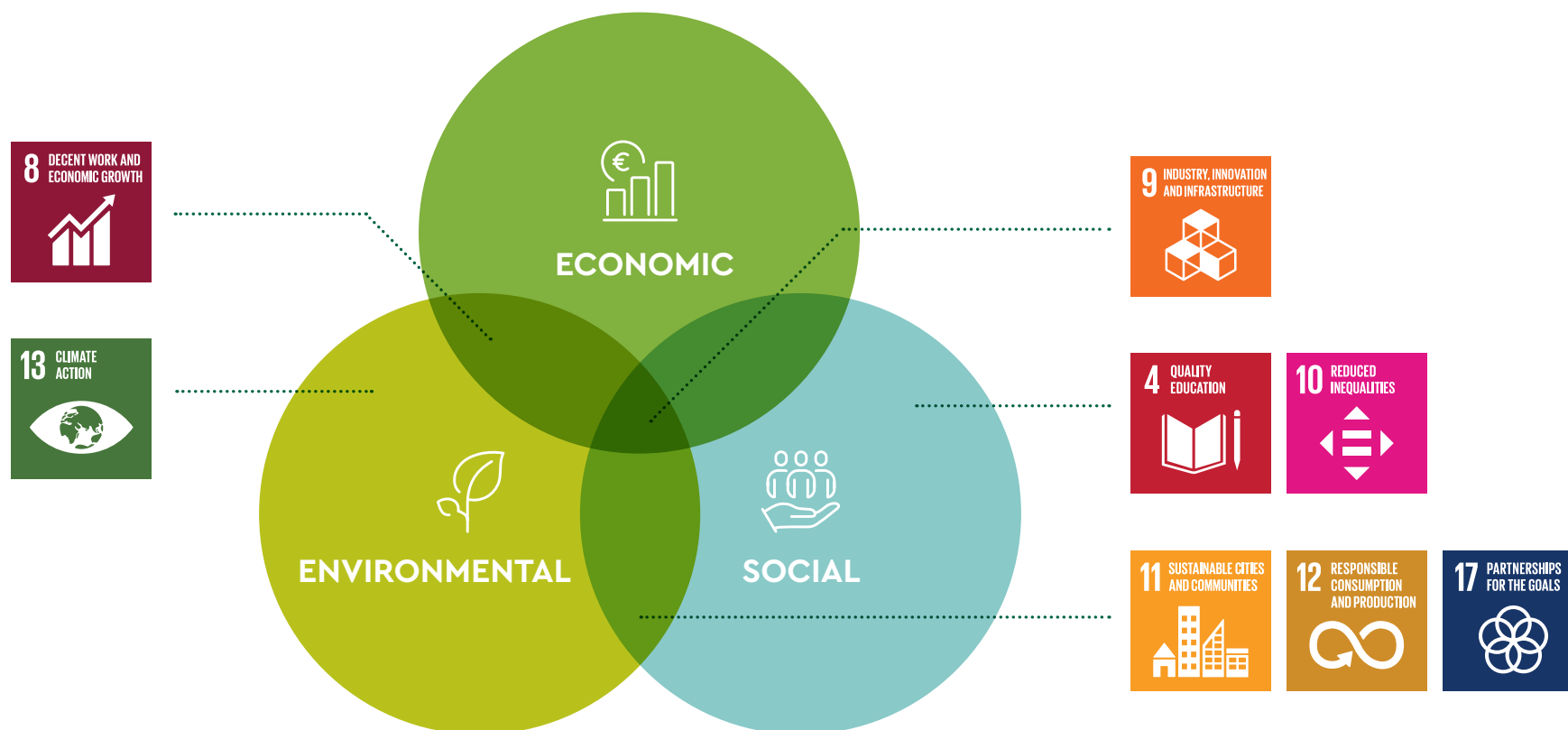
Hosting international Association Conferences boosts trade partnerships, foreign investments, and export diversification while enhancing Ireland's role in global value chains. These conferences connect local experts with global stakeholders, promoting industry competitiveness, cultural exchange, and Ireland's commitment to sustainability and human rights, thereby strengthening Ireland's position as a leading trading nation.



UN SDG Alignment

The Association Conference Impact & Legacy framework has been designed to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs).

This aims to contribute meaningfully to the key UNSDGs which are prioritized in Ireland's Business Events Strategy 2030. By aligning business events with the UNSDGs, this not only contributes to global efforts to address pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges, but it demonstrates a commitment to foster responsible and sustainable business practices.



See Appendix 2 for UN SDG alignment at target level.

Our Theory of Change

A 'Theory of Change' is a detailed explanation of how and why a desired change is expected to happen, outlining the steps needed to achieve that change and the connections between them.

The 'Theory of Change' aims to illustrate how Fáilte Ireland's actions, in alignment with clients, industry partners, stakeholder communities, and Government of Ireland priorities, can catalyse the desired change.

The Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework lays out desired short, mid, and long-term changes in Ireland's knowledge, behaviour and conditions. This approach highlights the crucial role of stakeholder ecosystems in shaping conference decisions that enhance Ireland's reputation for hosting conferences with positive economic, social and environmental impacts, ultimately benefiting citizens.



 ECONOMIC	 SOCIAL	 ENVIRONMENTAL
Desired outcomes	Desired outcomes	Desired outcomes
• A wide ecosystem understands the role of conferences through ongoing training and engagement. • Collaborations and synergies aim to attract the "right conferences", invest as such and maximise effects on various stakeholders.	• An impact ecosystem is formed and relationships build around bridging social gaps and needs. • Conferences are identified and aligned with those gaps, and bids are won with this value proposition.	• Conferences and supply chain understand their environmental impact and know how to reduce it. • Conferences are delivered more sustainably through using fewer resources and reducing waste.
Mid to long-term outcomes	Mid to long-term outcomes	Mid to long-term outcomes
• Contribute to economic growth by enhancing local employment opportunities. • Foster sectoral impact and support research, development, and innovation initiatives. • Attract skilled professionals, promoting opportunities within the country. • Actively support urban regeneration and bolster local businesses by driving local development.	• Champion equity, diversity, and inclusion by promoting the participation and visibility of underrepresented groups in conferences. • Contribute to the improvement of community health and well-being through initiatives that positively impact the local communities. • Contribute to national and international societal progress targets by aligning with government priorities and UNSDGs.	• Encourage sustainable buying and practices in the supply chain to lower resource use and reduce carbon footprint. • Support the protection of natural systems through conservation and restoration projects. • Reduce resource use and promote circular economy principles in conference execution.
Resulting impact	Resulting impact	Resulting impact
Realising the value of business events.	Contributing to building stronger communities at local, sectoral, and national levels.	Delivering business events that exceed environmental criteria.

Figure 2: Fáilte Ireland's Theory of Change

Stakeholder Engagement

Cocreation with key stakeholders is an essential aspect of the Association Conference Impact & Legacy framework. Each stakeholder group will engage through collaborative efforts, comprehensive training, and consistent communication. This alignment will ensure collective implementation activities that align with strategic goals and contribute to the measurement and reporting of conferences economic, social, and environmental impacts.

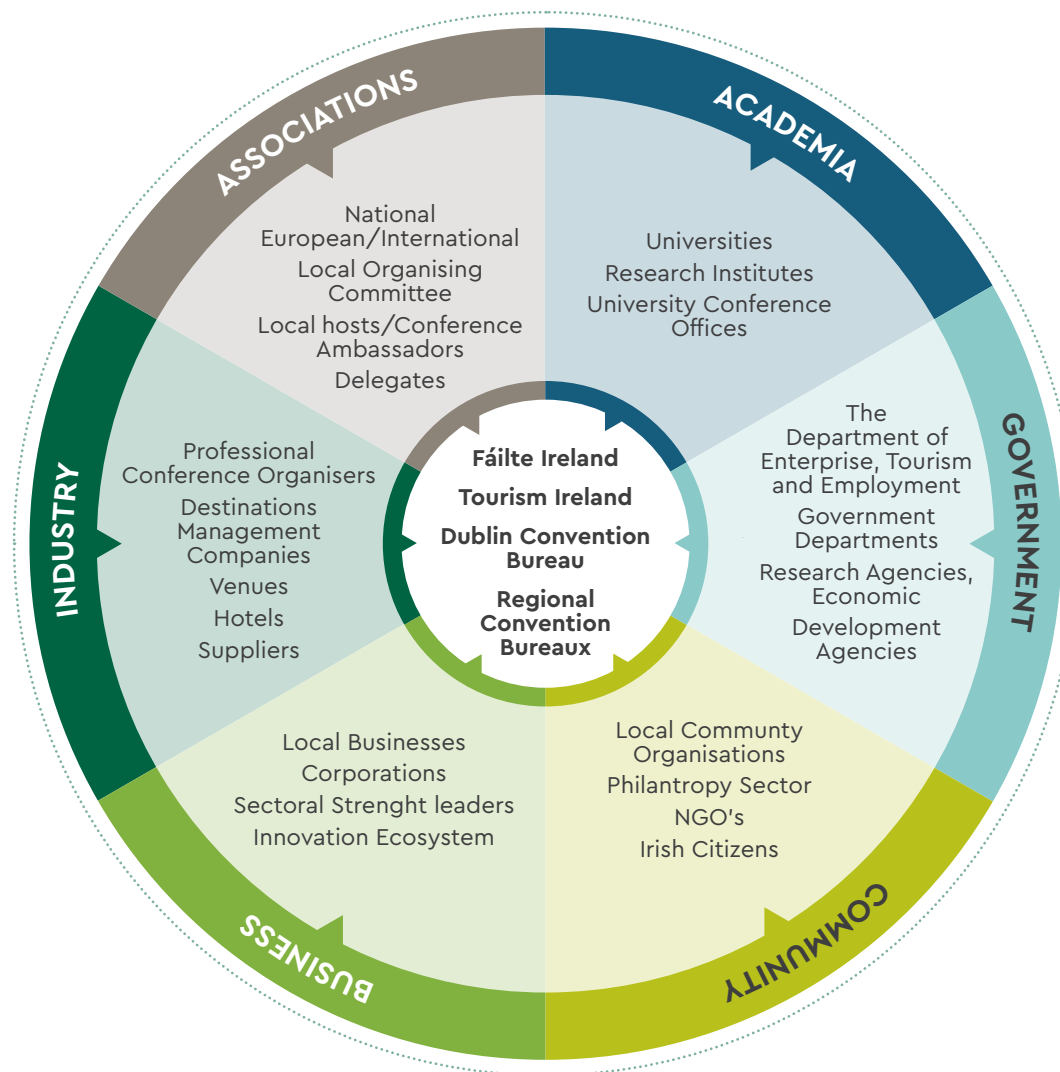


Figure 3: Stakeholder engagement in cocreation process

Focus Areas

By aligning our efforts across these focus areas, we can cultivate a resilient ecosystem that not only attracts high value conferences but also leverages them to generate long-term benefits for our communities and industries.



Figure 4: Focus Areas



Focus area 1: Strengthened Ecosystem

Building a strong ecosystem through awareness raising, capacity-building and engagement.

KEY OBJECTIVES	DESCRIPTION
1.1 Fostering a new impact mindset across the ecosystem	Creating a comprehensive understanding of the Association Conference Impact & Legacy Roadmap by the Business Events Ecosystem.
1.2 Building our partners' capacity to support the roadmap	Empowering a wide 'impact taskforce' within Fáilte Ireland and across Ireland, equipped with the necessary skills and tools to execute the Association Conference Impact & Legacy Roadmap.
1.3 Engaging and nurturing stakeholders for change	Building a robust and dynamic stakeholder engagement strategy by identifying and mapping the interests and priorities of key stakeholders.



Focus area 2: Transformational Conference Attraction Strategies

Transforming conference attraction strategies to address sectoral priorities and societal progress gaps.

KEY OBJECTIVES	DESCRIPTION
2.1 Understanding and targeting societal progress gaps and priorities for Ireland	Identifying and addressing societal progress gaps in Ireland through engagement with Government of Ireland departments, community organisations, and relevant sources to align conferences with priorities for Ireland.
2.2 Positioning conferences as strategic drivers of development for Ireland's priority sectors	Aligning conferences with sectoral growth and innovation goals by developing profiles that showcase regional strengths and economic contributions.
2.3 Securing conferences that deliver "value over volume"	Enhancing the conference qualification process to ensure targeted conferences have a clear mission for impact and securing strong commitments from local champions or organisers to achieve broader Impact and Legacy goals.



Focus area 3: Impactful Conference Design

Planning and designing conferences for impact emphasising deeper collaborations throughout the life cycle.

KEY OBJECTIVES	DESCRIPTION
3.1 Designing with impact at the heart of the conference life cycle	Identifying and promoting industry partners who can support associations in achieving social, economic, or environmental goals. Empowering partners to help association clients redesign conference strategies, and foster collaboration with local communities for long-lasting outcomes.
3.2 Expanding the conference beyond the four walls to deliver broader community benefits	Collaborating with partners in designing activities around the conference that will address wider impact agendas and have broader outcomes. Integrating conference topics into public activities to engage citizens, fostering connections between conference attendees and local initiatives, and creating immersive experiences highlighting Ireland's culture.



Focus area 4: Partnerships and Resourcing

Forging strategic partnerships and optimising resource mobilisation to scale meaningful impact.

KEY OBJECTIVES	DESCRIPTION
4.1 Achieving optimal organisational structure and resource allocation for maximum impact	Creating an optimal organisational structure and resource allocation within Fáilte Ireland to maximise impact.
4.2 Establishing powerful partnerships and positioning Fáilte Ireland as a thought leader in the impact and legacy space	Active involvement in industry alliances, international forums and global collaboration with industry peers to drive collective impact.
4.3 Contributing to uncovering revenue sources to support the development and scaling of Impact & Legacy projects in Ireland	Evolving and growing the subvention fund for high-impact conferences, reshaping criteria for eligibility and reporting, and identifying additional funding from external partners, and EU schemes. Assisting international clients to navigate Ireland's funding landscape.



Focus area 5: Measurement and Communication

Setting clear goals, tracking advancement and communicating accomplishments with transparency.

KEY OBJECTIVES	DESCRIPTION
5.1 Developing an Impact & Legacy framework for conferences	Implementing the Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework that maximises social impacts from conferences by engaging industry partners and the broader ecosystem.
5.2 Designing a robust data infrastructure and building data capacity	Creating a strong data infrastructure and enhancing data capacity to support the measurement goals.
5.3 Implementing effective reporting	Creating a standardized reporting system for consistent and clear communication of conference outcomes nationwide.
5.4 Communicating effectively to build engagement and enhance Ireland's reputation	Building engagement and enhancing Ireland's reputation by effectively communicating the outcomes of the Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework.

Measurement

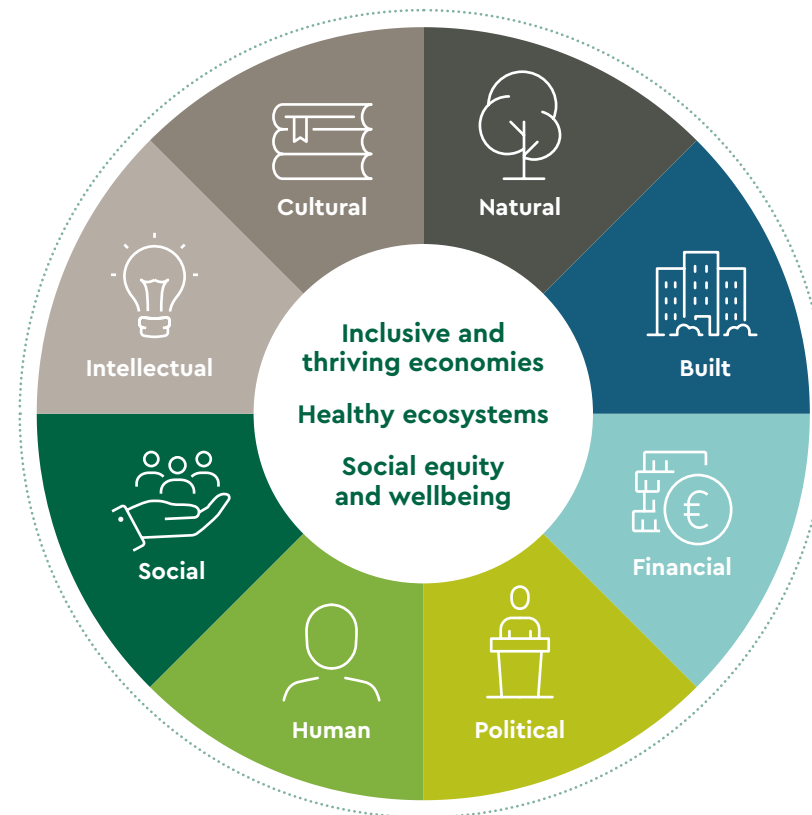
The Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework is built upon #Meet4Impact's BE Impactful Framework®, incorporating insights and adaptations from stakeholder feedback. This framework emphasises the need to plan and report on impacts that extend beyond mere economic benefits.

Framework Structure

The framework is structured around eight "Impact Dimensions", representing the various ways that value can be generated for the benefit of humanity and the planet, with each dimension listing several "broad outcomes." These outcomes represent the positive changes expected from conferences.

To track these outcomes, indicators are used, which can be reported at both the conference and local levels. This ensures a complete understanding of a conference's impact and allows for national reporting to highlight the benefits to the Government of Ireland and its citizens.

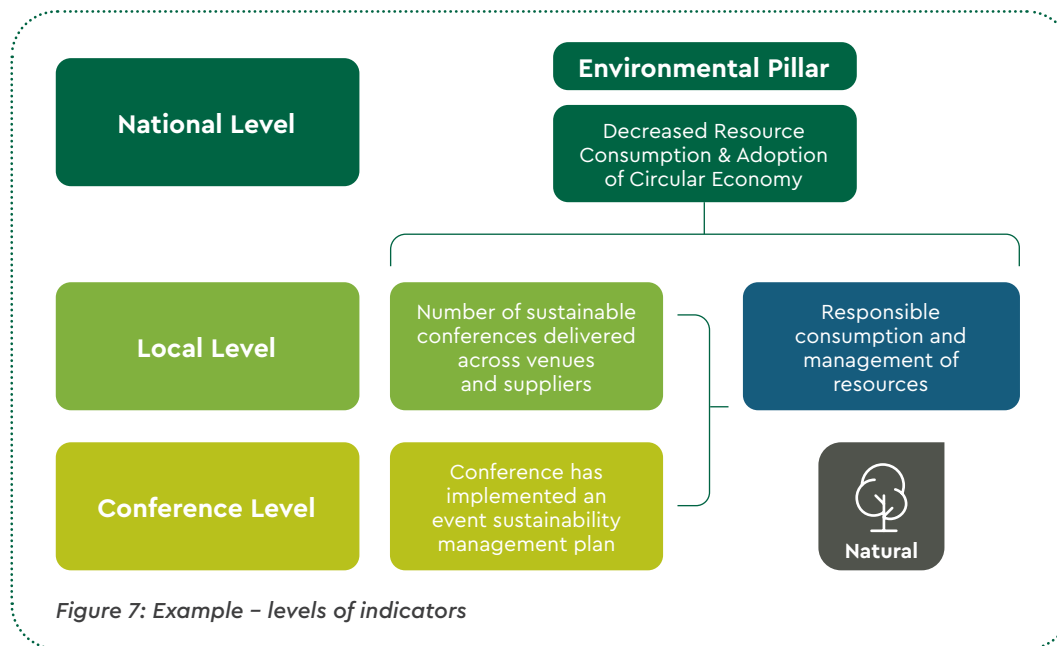
Using the Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework helps stakeholders understand progress towards each outcome while recognising the unique contributions of each conference. This approach supports targeted local actions and respects the different goals, expertise, and data capacities of stakeholders, ensuring a holistic understanding of a conference's impact.



Indicators

The Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework features three levels of indicators which track how well each outcome is achieved, from conference level, to local and national levels:

- 1. Conference level** indicators show the event's contribution to the outcome, designed to be straightforward for easy reporting.
- 2. Local level** indicators aggregate data from multiple conferences, providing a destination-wide average and a snapshot of impact across sectors and venues.
- 3. National level** indicators are grouped under fewer Core Impact Metrics, which enable the reporting of the outcomes of conferences against the national priorities as described in Ireland's Business Events Strategy 2030.



Economic



Figure 8: Alignment of indicators within measurement framework

Social

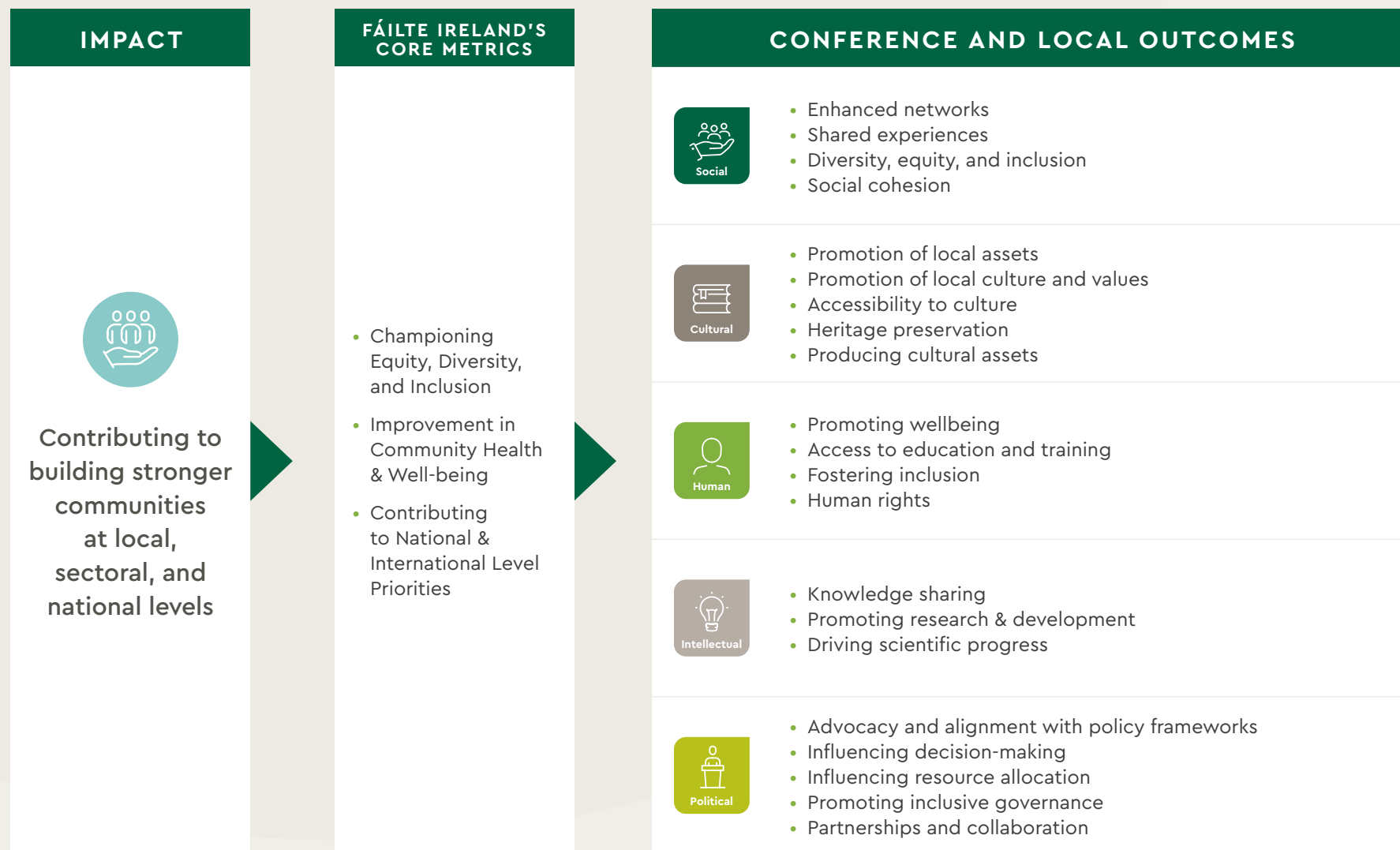


Figure 8: Alignment of indicators within measurement framework

Environmental



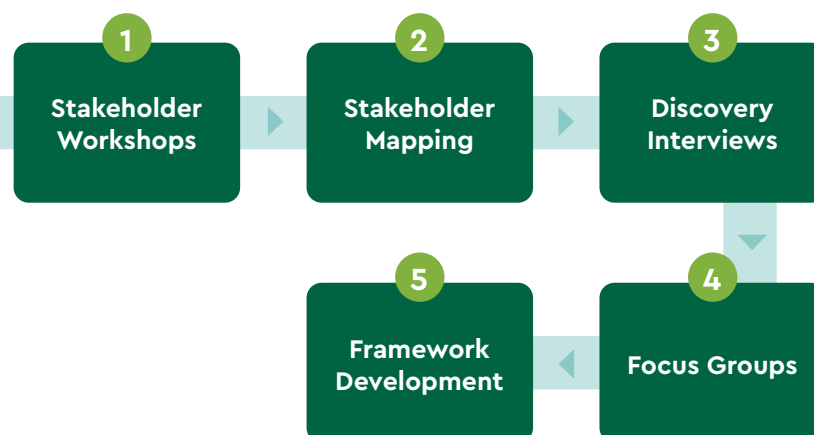
Figure 8: Alignment of indicators within measurement framework

IMPACT	FÁILTE IRELAND'S CORE METRICS	CONFERENCE AND LOCAL OUTCOMES				
 Realising the value of conferences	Economic Job creation Sectoral Impact Talent Attraction Support for Urban Regeneration and Local Businesses	 Financial Visitor economy/tourism Support to local economy Job opportunities Sectoral effects: Investments/exports, entrepreneurship, attraction of talent	 Human Access to education and training Supporting professional and personal development	 Built Inclusive and sustainable built infrastructure Sustainable transportation Technological infrastructure	 Intellectual Knowledge sharing Promoting research & development Driving scientific progress Sectoral development: new knowledge, innovation, intellectual property; positioning sector leadership & expertise	 Political Influencing decision-making Influencing resource allocation Partnerships and collaboration
 Contributing to building stronger communities at local, sectoral, and national levels	Social Championing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Improvement in Community Health & Well-being Contributing to National & International Level Priorities	 Social Enhanced networks Shared experiences Diversity, equity, and inclusion Social cohesion	 Cultural Promotion of local assets Promotion of local culture and values Accessibility to culture Heritage preservation Producing cultural assets	 Human Promoting wellbeing Access to education and training Fostering inclusion Human rights	 Intellectual Knowledge sharing Promoting research & development Driving scientific progress	 Political Advocacy and alignment with policy frameworks Influencing decision-making Influencing resource allocation Promoting inclusive governance Partnerships and collaboration
 Delivering conferences that exceed environmental criteria	Environmental Sustainable Procurement & Practices in Supply Chain Protection of Natural Systems Decreased Resource Consumption & Adoption of Circular Economy	 Natural Ecosystem restoration Biodiversity protection Responsible use of resources Climate action	 Cultural Heritage preservation	 Built Inclusive and sustainable built infrastructure Sustainable transportation Responsible production	 Intellectual Knowledge sharing Promoting research & development Driving scientific progress	

Appendix 1

Development of the Association Conference Impact & Legacy Framework

Cocreation Methodology



Stakeholders involvement in the Cocreation Process

#Meet4Impact
 Abbey Conference and Events
 Advantage
 Cashel Palace
 Conference Organisers
 Conference Partners International
 Convention Centre Dublin
 Cork Convention Bureau
 Croke Park
 Dalata Hotel Group
 Department of Enterprise, Tourism
 and Employment
 Diageo
 Dublin City Council
 Dublin City University
 Dublin Convention Bureau
 Enterprise Ireland
 Fáilte Ireland
 Galway Convention Bureau
 Global Destination Sustainability
 Movement

Hastings Hotels Belfast
 INEC Killarney
 Institute of Public Health Ireland
 Intercontinental Dublin
 International Development Agency
 Irish Tour Operators Association
 Kerry Convention Bureau
 Keynote PCO
 Maynooth University
 Munster Technological University
 Royal College of Surgeons
 Shannon Convention Bureau
 Titanic Belfast
 Tourism Ireland
 Tourism NI
 Trinity College Dublin
 University College Cork
 University College Dublin
 University of Galway
 University of Limerick
 Visit Belfast

Appendix 3

#Meet4Impact's BE Impactful Framework© Impact Dimensions



NATURAL (or Environmental) assets represent positive contributions to the environment, ecosystems and habitats as well as effective mitigation efforts towards climate action and responsible production and consumption of resources.



BUILT (or manufactured) assets represent positive contributions to the built environment, buildings or architectural structures, transport infrastructure, inclusive design, or outcomes related to the production of tangible goods and assets.



FINANCIAL assets represent flow-on effects of direct economic inputs, and broader economic development drivers that contribute to building inclusive economies.



POLITICAL assets represent the positive influence on institutional and governmental decision-making and policy; the attraction & distribution of public resources; and strengthening of the voice and profile of the organisation(s) and sector(s).



HUMAN assets represent any value or opportunity created for individuals that enhances their personal or professional development as well as benefits to socioeconomic status, health, and well-being.



SOCIAL assets represent positive contributions to social capital, such as strengthened networks and collaborations; shared experiences; diversity; sense of collective identity and pride.



INTELLECTUAL assets represent gains in innovation, research, intellectual property, and knowledge creation and diffusion.



CULTURAL assets reinforce local or national values and traditions; showcase local assets, languages, and promote heritage, thus acting to preserve it.

Fáilte Ireland

88 – 95 Amiens Street
Dublin 1

D01 WR86

Tel: +353 (0)1-5741990

Email: customersupport@failteireland.ie

