

## **Russian Convention Bureau (RCB) Serves as Partner and Participates in the Business Program of the Eastern Economic Forum'2018**

On September 11-13, 2018, the Russian Convention Bureau took part in the Eastern Economic Forum for the first time in its history. The RCB also served as a partner in the business program of the Forum. According to RCB director Aleksei Kalachev, social and economic development of the Far East is one of the factors of Russia's success on the international arena. Attracting and holding business events can have considerable influence on this process, as it not only provides for additional revenues into the regional budget but also improves the investment climate by promoting and developing the infrastructure. These developments help the local industry, expand international business ties and promote the export potential of the region.

During the Forum the Russian Convention Bureau signed a number of agreements of strategical cooperation with various regions of the Far Eastern Federal District; these included agreements with the **Primorsky Krai Administration, the Government of Kamchatka Krai and the Government of Sakhalin Region.** The main goal of the agreements, signed between the RCB and regional bodies of the authority is to organize joint projects aimed at developing the event potential of these regions and promoting their infrastructural capabilities for holding business events.

Aleksei Kalachev, Director of the Russian Convention Bureau, took part as an expert in such events of the Forum program as the session entitled **“Science Frontiers: Creating the Future Today”** (according to ICCA statistics, the largest number of international rotated events happens in the academic community), and the session entitled **“Development of Tourism: Cluster Approach and Export of Tourism Services.”**

The key event of the Russian Convention Bureau's participation in the Eastern Economic Forum was the holding of the session entitled **“The Far East in the Limelight of Events,”** which was organized with support of **Vnesheconombank** and the Agency of Strategic Initiatives. Leading experts of the industry, representatives of bodies of authority, regions, and the business community discussed the ways in which investments into business events and their infrastructure will help create conditions for business communications, stimulate business activity and influence social and economic development of the Far East. The experts presenting keynote speeches at the sessions included **Aleksei Kalachev**, Director of the Russian Convention Bureau; **Elena Myakotnikova**, Director of the Agency of Strategic Initiatives, **Evgeny Podshivalov**, Deputy General Director of the Foundation for Development of Single-Enterprise Settlements, **Vasily Grebennikov**, Deputy General Director of the Foundation for Development of the Far East the Baikal Region, **Wang Ping**, Chairman of the PRC Tourism Chamber; and **Nikita Anisimov**, Rector of FEFU. **Sergey Selivanov**, Head of the Section of Exhibitions, Department of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation, **Nikolay Fadeev**, Director of Bashkortostan Convention Bureau, and **Vera Ermillova**, Director of DalExpoCenter Company, shared practical examples and experiences from their work. The discussion was moderated by **Alexey Muratov**, partner of STRELKA Design Bureau.

The speakers at the session have unanimously agreed that major business events change the face of regions and provide an impetus to development of corresponding sectors of the industry. The Far East, with its unique geographic location, has the potential of becoming a “Window to Russia” for countries of Pacific Asia, and various events within the framework of this cooperation. Vladivostok today is the only city in the Far Eastern Federal District to be included in the top 20 regions in the investment potential rating, compiled annually by the R&C Exhibition Research and Development Center. Today Vladivostok ranks sixth in this rating. With time, this will allow the city to become the event capital of the Asian part of Russia.

Over the past several years since the APEC summit, **Nikita Anisimov** says, the number of events organized annually just on the Far Eastern Federal University campus alone grew from 100 to 300. This is not the limit: the interest of organizers and participants in the region is on the rise. **Vasily Grebennikov** confirmed that as part of the development strategy for Russky Island, its convention and exhibition infrastructure will be improved. This will create better capabilities for Vladivostok to host large international events.

In his speech, **Aleksei Kalachev** noted that all the regions of the Far East can become centers of business events, but their industrial specialization will need to be taken into account. The Russian Convention Bureau is currently working on industry specialization passports of various regions of the Russian Federation, Mr. Kalachev said. These passports will help the regions to fine-tune their offer on the market of conventions and conferences. According to the assessment by the RCB, any four medium-sized events (with under 500 participants and lasting 4 days on average) can generate the total economic effect of more than RUB 300 million for the region (including tax payments and participants’ accommodation expenses).

Speaking about the experience of China, one of the leading countries on the international event market, **Wang Ping** referred to the event industry as “an environmentally friendly sector of economy.” She also noted the unique nature and cultural traditions of the Far East, saying that they provide additional preferences to the area, and make the region an attractive destination for business tourism and for creation of the necessary infrastructure.

After the session the Russian Convention Bureau suggested preparing applications of various regions of the Far East to participate in the bids for hosting several major international conferences in 2020-2025, making sure that their topics correspond to key economic development priorities of the said regions. The participants of the discussion also suggested taking into account the event industry indicators while assessing the effectiveness of regional development and creation of various rating scales.

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**The Russian Convention Bureau** was founded in November 2017 with support of the Government of the Russian Federation for effective development of the event industry of the country, its integration in the global meetings industry. Founders of the Association: **Roscongress Foundation** – a socially oriented non-financial development institution, major organizer of international, convention, exhibition and public events; JSC Russian Export Center – a state-owned institute that supports the development of the non-commodity exports sector; the International Foundation of Technology and Investment (IFTI, a non-profit non-governmental organization, created for support of science, culture, education, and social activities in Russia), the Exhibit Research and Development Center R&C – the only Russian company providing the whole range of marketing and consulting services in the event industry.

For more information visit the official website of the Russian Convention Bureau [www.russiacb.com](http://www.russiacb.com)