

Medical Success in the South of France

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Located at the crossroads of Europe, Africa and the Middle East, the Provence-Alpes Côte d’Azur region is not only an easily accessible destination, it also boasts 300 days of sunshine per year, rich culture and UNESCO-listed heritage sites. A key player in life sciences, the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur region has been attracting the attention of European and international associations with its dynamic medical ecosystem that promotes opportunities in a variety of different ways.

In France, Provence-Alpes Côte d’Azur ranks second in terms of patent filing and boasts more than 170 health and life sciences research laboratories. The region specializes particularly on research topics such as infectiology (infectious disease), immunology, oncology, neuroscience and ophthalmology, looking at these topics not only on a national level but on a European one as well. Four regional universities—Aix-Marseille, Avignon, Nice Sophia-Antipolis, South Toulon Var—as well as competitive clusters such as Marseille-based Eurobiomed with more than 280 members specialising in drugs, diagnostics, implantable medical devices, and e-health, fuel the region’s strong research network.

The South of France also offers plenty of opportunities for sponsorships. The region is a well-trusted and competitive destination for many companies in the pharmaceutical and AI industry but also in the management of big data, digital biology and medical imaging, with some leaders headquartered in the region. As a getaway to the EMEA region, Provence-Alpes Côte d’Azur has become a worldwide leader in the hosting of large medical events, which attract on average 20% more participants than anywhere else.

No surprise

It comes as no surprise, then, that Cannes (pictured), Marseille, Nice and Toulon continue to draw more medical congresses each year that comply with the guidelines of the MedTech Europe Code of Ethical Business Practice, which regulate all aspects of the industry's relationship with healthcare professionals and healthcare organisations. Forthcoming examples include the Congress of the French Society of Vascular Medicine in Cannes (1,000 delegates); the European Macrophage and Dendritic Cell Society Convention (2,500 delegates) and the European Public Health Conference (2,000 delegates) in Marseille; the European Congress of Pathology (2,500 delegates) and the Movement Disorder Society Congress (4,500 delegates) in Nice; and the conference of the French Society of Emergency (400 delegates) in Toulon.

In response,

the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur regional authority launched the 'Attract Congresses and Events' regional programme, aimed to improve the bidding and hosting experience for large international events. Designed to financially support events of a structural nature in sectors of excellence, such and healthcare, the aim is to generate substantial spin-offs in terms of economics and image. Eligible congresses and conferences include those that combine over 800 nights. The programme is managed by Provence Côte d'Azur Events, the regional convention bureau.

One prime example is the NeuroFrance, which was organised by the French Neuroscience Society in Marseille in May. The region's "Attract Congresses & Events" programme was a major factor in the organiser's decision to host the event in the South of France. *"The importance of the local community in neuroscience, the commitment of the South of France in the areas of research and health and the attractiveness of the city of Marseille were decisive elements in the selection of this destination for the 14th edition of our biennial conference,"* explains Lydia Kerkerian-Le Goff, President of the French Neuroscience Society. *"All in all, it was an easy process, and we would like to thank all our partners for their support of the project."*

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