Montreal to Host the 2022 International AIDS Conference

The HIV community will once again gather in person at AIDS 2022 next summer, but the conference will also have a virtual component.

May 25, 2021 By Trent Straube

Every other year, the International AIDS Conference takes place in a different city across the globe. The International AIDS Society, the organization that spearheads the HIV/AIDS conference, announced that next year's event, the 24th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2022), will take place July 29 to August 2 in Montreal.

The previous conference, AIDS 2020, was slated for San Francisco but took place virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to in-person events, AIDS 2022 will also be virtual, according to the IAS press release.

> AIDS 2022 – the 24th International AIDS Conference – will take place in #Montreal, Canada ???? from 29 July – 2 August 2022. Learn more about the hybrid conference and read the announcement at https://t.co/ANu5vckZID #AIDS2022 pic.twitter.com/i7Nkt3oCnq
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> — International AIDS Conference (@AIDS_conference) May 25, 2021

Registration will open in November on AIDS2022.org. Scholarships are available for both in-person attendance and internet data provision.

Mammoth undertakings, the International AID Conferences constitute the world's largest HIV/AIDS meetings. Researchers and scientists present their latest findings; policymakers and advocates convene; and organizations, businesses and pharmaceutical companies staff booths where they interact with members of the community.

"In the face of COVID-19, the global HIV community banded together to apply lessons learned from decades of pandemic response. It is now critical to get the HIV response back on track," IAS president and AIDS 2022 International cochair Adeeba Kamarulzaman said in the press release. "AIDS 2022 will be a pivotal moment to once more galvanize the scientific, policy and activist communities to push the response forward. We owe it to the hundreds of thousands of people we still lose to AIDS-related illnesses every year."

"Following COVID-19 vaccine discovery, we are closer than ever before to an effective HIV vaccine and even on a path toward a cure," AIDS 2022 local cochair Jean-Pierre Routy added. "Breakthroughs in testing and treatment have improved the global response. Communities most affected by HIV continue to push for greater inclusion and accountability. Montreal welcomes our colleagues and allies from all over the world at a truly exciting time for HIV research, policy and programs."

"We know that there is still a long way to go in the fight against HIV and AIDS," said the Honorable Patty Hajdu, Canada's minister of health, in the press release. "In 2022, Canada will proudly host AIDS 2022 so that we can further our commitments to ending the HIV and AIDS global epidemic. We remain committed to our 95-95-95 targets, moving toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and to reducing stigma and discrimination. By bringing together domestic and international partners, we can redouble our collective efforts to improve the health of all our citizens and finish the fight against HIV and AIDS."

The targets Hajdu refers to include the goal set by many cities and countries of getting 95% of people living with HIV aware of their status, getting 95% of those people on treatment and connected to care and getting 95% of that group to an undetectable level of virus, meaning their HIV is controlled by medication and they are unable to transmit the virus through sex as well as live a healthier and longer life. These targets were updated from the 90-90-90 goals that expired in 2020.

This will not be Canada's first time hosting the conference. Montreal hosted it in 1989, Vancouver in 1996 and Toronto in 2006.

When it was first announced that San Francisco would host AIDS 2020, many HIV activists decried the choice, stating not only that the city was too expensive but that the United States, under the Trump administration, was hostile to many communities wishing to attend, including Muslim advocates, sex workers and people who use drugs. As a result, an alternative conference, HIV2020, was scheduled for July in Mexico City (see "AIDS 2020 vs. HIV2020"). In the end, it, too, was mostly shuttered because of COVID-19.

For a collection of articles about AIDS 2020, including the research that came out of the conference, click #AIDS 2020.

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