First Poland MICE Masterclass held in Warsaw

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On 9 September 2026, Warsaw hosted the first in-person Poland MICE Masterclass, a new programme of the Poland Convention Bureau of the Polish Tourism Organisation (POT) led by Ciara Feely. The initiative is designed to strengthen the sales capabilities of Poland's meetings industry and support POT partners in attracting more international events to Poland.

The inaugural workshop took place at Novotel Warszawa Centrum, launching a development programme scheduled to run throughout 2026-2027. The initiative is aimed at Poland Convention Bureau POT partners, including representatives of city and regional convention bureaux, Recommended Professional Congress Organisers (PCOs), and Recommended Incentive Travel Companies (ITCs). Staff members of the Poland Convention Bureau POT also participate in the programme.

What unites all participants is their role in the international meetings industry. Whether representing a company, a city, or a region, they collectively contribute to promoting a single destination: Poland.

Sales Begin with Understanding the Client

The first Poland MICE Masterclass was not a traditional presentation-based training session. Instead, it started from the client's perspective, focusing on why organizations choose to bring people together and what outcomes they ultimately hope to achieve through an event.

Participants worked with a customer empathy map, analysing factors such as client thinking patterns, challenges, desired outcomes, and behaviours. Additional exercises explored event objectives and the differences between the perspectives of corporations, associations, and agencies representing clients.

This approach reflects one of the core principles of the Steps to WIN™ methodology: before recommending a specific hotel, venue, city, or programme, sales professionals must first understand the client's goals. Rather than simply presenting a catalogue of options, the objective is to become a trusted partner capable of developing solutions that address real business needs.

Throughout the workshop, Ciara Feely emphasized the importance of asking the right questions, building trust, and moving beyond a product-focused sales approach.

"Killer Questions" Instead of Ready-Made Answers

A key element of the workshop focused on developing effective questions for conversations with international clients. The workbook prepared by Ciara Feely included a dedicated section entitled "Killer Questions", where participants recorded questions they intended to incorporate into their future business practice.

Teams then worked on a sample brief involving an international event for the technology sector. Rather than immediately proposing a hotel or destination, participants were tasked with identifying

what additional information they needed from the client in order to design the most appropriate solution.

Only after clarifying the client's objectives did they move on to generating ideas. This process was encapsulated by two guiding questions featured in the workbook:

"What do I need to understand before suggesting a solution?"

"Ideas to explore once the objectives are clear."

From Trade Show Meetings to Real Business Opportunities

One of the reasons for launching the Poland MICE Masterclass is the strategic importance of international trade shows for the activities of the Poland Convention Bureau and its partners.

The programme was specifically designed for professionals who conduct business meetings at major international industry events such as IMEX Frankfurt, IMEX America, and IBTM World Barcelona.

Its objective is to improve both the effectiveness of these conversations and the quality of proposals prepared afterwards. Success depends not only on attracting the attention of a hosted buyer during a brief meeting, but also on accurately identifying client potential, determining next steps, preparing tailored proposals, and building long-term relationships.

This is particularly important given the Poland Convention Bureau's significant investment in international trade fairs and the organization of the Polish National Stand. Enhancing the skills of industry representatives directly supports Poland's competitiveness in international markets.

Working Together to Strengthen Poland's Position

The Poland MICE Masterclass aims to deliver more than individual sales training. It also creates a platform for collaboration among representatives from various sectors of the Polish meetings industry.

Introducing the programme, Ciara Feely highlighted this aspect:

"This is the inaugural Poland MICE Masterclass, bringing together professionals from across the Polish meetings industry to share knowledge, challenge one another, and collectively promote Poland at the most important trade shows and industry events."

In practice, this means facilitating knowledge exchange between convention bureaux, PCOs, and incentive travel organizers, while exploring more effective ways of communicating Poland's value proposition in an increasingly competitive international marketplace.

At the conclusion of the Warsaw workshop, Feely reflected on the participants' engagement:

"What I loved about today was that before we even started, people were coming up to me, expressing how grateful they were and how much they had been looking forward to the programme. Seeing that

level of energy, commitment, and desire to continue growing professionally is wonderful. Participants were open-minded, curious, and eager to explore new ideas. I was particularly impressed by how seriously they embraced the importance of listening to clients, focusing not simply on presenting their destination but on understanding the experience the event organizer wants to create and the impact they aim to achieve."

The Beginning of a Longer Journey

The workshop at Novotel Warszawa Centrum marked only the beginning of a broader learning process. Two online sessions were scheduled for later in 2026, on 24 September and 22 October, focusing on the development of more effective sales proposals. The next in-person workshop is planned for the first quarter of 2027.

The programme extends well beyond classroom training. Participants will work on practical assignments and real proposals, receive feedback from Ciara Feely, gain access to educational resources and recordings, and benefit from ongoing post-training support. Selected participants may also qualify for a smaller coaching group.

A key objective is the immediate application of newly acquired knowledge in everyday professional practice.

This philosophy defines the entire Poland MICE Masterclass programme: it is not merely about gaining knowledge, but about Ireland chapter.

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