International Sports Tourism 101

Sports Tourism Learning Institute

Course Description

This course introduces the foundations, trends, and strategic opportunities shaping international sports tourism. Explore the global sports landscape, the competitive advantages of the United States, and the ways destinations can use sports to support tourism, economic development, and community impact.

Industry perspectives and practical examples illustrate how destinations can assess opportunities and prepare for international sports business. The course concludes with an event evaluation framework that helps apply these concepts to real-world bid and hosting decisions.

STLI Certificate Playbook Course

STS Credits: 4

Format: Online, Self-Paced

Length: 5 sessions - approx. 4 total hours

Sports ETA Member Price: $399

Non-Member Price: $499

Meet the Industry Expert Leading this Course



Terrance Hasseltine is a nationally recognized executive leader with more than 30 years of experience shaping major events, sports tourism strategy, and public-private partnerships that drive economic impact and elevate destination brands. As Executive Director of the Maryland Sports Commission (2008–2025) and Vice President of the Maryland Stadium Authority, he architected initiatives that generated more than $3.25 billion in direct spending and advanced Maryland's position as a premier global event destination. Hasseltine has led complex, high-profile event strategies, including Baltimore-Maryland's bids for the 2022 and 2026 FIFA World Cup, the FEI Maryland 5 Star, the UCI Maryland Cycling Classic, the Army–Navy Games, NCAA Championships, and international soccer showcases. His leadership spans bid development, experiential marketing, legislative strategy, risk management, and multi-agency coordination.

Widely respected for his vision and industry leadership, he has served on

numerous national and international boards, including Sports ETA, where he previously served as Chairman. His work has earned honors including CEO of the Year, Maryland Tourism Person of the Year, Influential Marylander, and Sport Tourism Executive of the Year. Hasseltine holds a B.S. in Sports Management and Physical Education from SUNY Cortland and is a certified Sports Tourism Strategist.

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Course Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain the role of international sports tourism in destination development, economic impact, and global positioning.
2. Identify major trends and market forces shaping the global sports industry.
3. Describe the strategic advantages and capabilities that support U.S. participation in the international sports marketplace.
4. Evaluate how destinations can build international sports tourism strategies.
5. Assess whether a sports opportunity is a strong fit for a destination's assets, resources, and goals.

Course Content

This is a fully online, self-paced course consisting of 5 sessions. Course sessions include informative video lectures, participation worksheets, and printable PDF resources. This course takes approximately four hours to complete.

Session 1: What is International Sports Tourism?

In Session 1, participants will explore the foundations of international sports tourism, including three categories of sports tourism, and how destinations can use sports to drive visitation, economic impact, community benefit, and global brand awareness.

Session 2: An Overview of the Global Sports Landscape

Session 2 examines the forces reshaping the global sports industry, including technology, fan behavior, women's sports, venue development, sustainability, and governance. This session explores where growth and change are occurring in international sports.

Session 3: Strategic Advantages for the United States

Participants will learn about the structural advantages that position the United States as a major force in global sports. Monica Paul of the Dallas Sports Commission joins this session to bring these advantages to life through the experience of pursuing and hosting international events.

Session 4: Action Framework for a U.S. Destination

The goal of Session 4 is to move from strategy to action through a five-pillar framework designed to help destinations use sports as an integrated engine for tourism. The session connects various aspects of event portfolio development into one destination-wide operating approach.

Session 5: A Tool to Help Bring It All Together

Session 5 brings the course concepts together by applying the Sports Event Bid Evaluation Tool (SEBET) to determine how well a potential sports event aligns with a destination's assets, priorities, resources, and community goals.

Upon Completion

Successful completion of the course materials will earn you a Certificate of Achievement from the Sports Tourism Learning Institute and four credits towards your Sports Tourism Strategist Designation. Having completed this course, you will also gain a deeper understanding of the topic, real-world application strategies, and numerous professional resources and connections to reference during your career.

Questions?

If you have any questions about this course or any of our other courses, please contact us at info@sportseta.org. Because this course is self-paced, please do not try to contact the course instructor(s) with your questions. If you need technical help with the course, please email us at support@sportseta.org.