

Page Link: <https://www.northernkentuckyusa.com/news/wow-air-ready-for-takeoff/>

May 9, 2018 – A new era begins in international business and tourism in the Cincinnati region 11:50 p.m.

That's when 20 journalists from seven countries will arrive on the inaugural WOW air flight from Reykjavik, Iceland to CVG. The new service will open up a gateway for local travelers to explore Europe, and create new opportunities for European travelers to discover the Cincinnati region. Representing publications from Iceland, France, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Ireland, the visiting journalists will immerse themselves in a two-day experience that showcases Cincinnati's arts, culture, cuisine and personality.

"As the front door to our region, we couldn't be more excited to give WOW and journalists from around the world a warm welcome and an unforgettable first impression of our region," said Candace McGraw, CEO of the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG). "This new international service at CVG will have a considerable impact on attracting new international visitors and businesses, and we want to take advantage of every opportunity to tell our story to those future visitors."

Journalists will be hosted by a team representing the region's travel and tourism industry — CVG, Source Cincinnati, the Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau, meetNKY and the Cincinnati USA Regional Tourism Network. The journalists will have exposure to the full spectrum of travel experiences across the entire region — best-in-class accommodations, culinary, architecture, arts and culture, and so much more. And they'll arrive in grand style — the plane will be showered by a water cannon from two fire trucks as it pulls into the gate, a tradition for inaugural flights, and departing passengers will be treated to cake, balloons and music at their gate. The 'Cincinnati' sign on the Duke Energy Convention Center also will be illuminated in magenta, WOW air's brand color.

"In the past few years, the Cincinnati region has created an extraordinary buzz in U.S. media outlets like the New York Times, USA Today and dozens more," said Julie Calvert, executive director of Source Cincinnati, the organization missioned to tell the region's story to national media outlets. "The opportunity to increase our engagement with international press to help educate global travelers about the incredible experiences they can find in the region will yield benefits for years to come."

WOW air will operate nonstop between CVG and Reykjavik, Iceland, four times per week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday) with a new 200-seat Airbus A321 aircraft. WOW air gives travelers access to dozens of new destinations, from Amsterdam and Barcelona to Stockholm and Warsaw.

The service will increase to five times per week between June and September. The low-cost airline will offer one-way flights to Iceland starting at \$99 and other international destinations for \$149. Connecting service will be available to London, Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, Frankfurt, Dublin and Copenhagen. The new air service is expected to bring 14,000 to 16,000 visitors to the Cincinnati region each year, with an estimated economic impact of \$30 million to \$35 million.

"This new partnership with WOW will have a positive impact on so many fronts — economically, culturally, creatively," said McGraw. "Today marks the first of thousands of new international travelers coming to our community — many for the first time — and we're ready. We've always known Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky to be a world-class destination — starting today, more of the world will get to experience that as well."