



WFTGA - World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations

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Registered Office: Vienna, Austria

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WFTGA is an NGO in Operational Relations with UNESCO – Affiliate Member of UNWTO

World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations Presidents Report May 2020 – August 2020

(Follows Membership communication sent 30th April 2020)

31st August 2020

Dear WFTGA Members, Tourist Guide colleagues and friends of the WFTGA Family,

People are hard-wired to resist change – its natural. Parts of our brain interprets change as a threat to the body. The changes that have had to happen during 2020 to us in both our personal and professional lives have inadvertently created challenges that we did not anticipate. These challenges have since helped us grow, evolve and band together as a nation, as humans, as individuals and as professionals.

We are all navigating this new way of life and there is no right or wrong. We need patience as we experiment and identify opportunities. As there is no play book for what we have experienced in 2020, we can only learn and be supportive as the year moves on.

It was recently brought to my attention that perhaps we don't shout enough from the roof tops, shout about our achievements as individuals, as an organisation and as members.

An opportunity for members to share 'Your Associations' 2020 Journey' will be mentioned in the August Guidelines International Edition. Further communication on this will be sent directly to the paid WFTGA Association members inboxes.

In addition, find a summary of all the most recent WFTGA activities below. We always welcome news from our members on news@wftga.org so please continue to share any of your achievements and projects during 2020 with us.

Activities of the President, Executive Board, Area Representatives, Training Committee, Global Brand Ambassadors and our Administrator include;

(but not limited to) (refer to the end of the document for acronym descriptions)

➤ **Operational and Administration**

- Regular EXBO virtual meetings are convened
- Regular Administration meetings are conducted
- Responding to daily communications
- Compiling and issuing of the EXBO Board pack
- Drafting of all meeting Agendas and Minutes
- Completion of monthly administration reports

- Regular Convention related meetings
- Communication with the interim conference destination candidates
- Communications with individual association members
- Revision of all WFTGA contracts and related documentation to address the new way of conducting meetings and events – relevant to conventions and ITCs
- Completing new member Welcome letters and communications
- Keeping up to date records and data management of members
- Compilation and updating of the communications calendar – internal
- Steering sub-committees and co-opted members
- Steering the Training Committee
- Steering the Area Representatives and Global Brand ambassadors
- Guidance/advice/mentorship to each other, area representatives and members
- Actively conducting research around the best practice and way forward for the Convention
- Disciplinary letters and processes
- Ongoing collaborative virtual meetings between EXBO, Area Representatives, Global Brand Ambassadors and Training Committee

➤ **Membership and Financial**

- Responding to and directing Membership enquiries and requests
- Processing Membership application forms
- Compiling and Issuing of invoices (through our online Invoicing programme, *Invoicely*)
- Processing, signing and finalizing of Expense claims, Invoices and payments
- Member Association and potential member virtual meetings
- Assisting with advice and knowledge sharing on setting up of Associations
- Financial Inspection Committee meetings
- Preparation of financials for Auditing purposes for Financial year end
- Financial monthly reconciliations
- Membership digital certificates
- Letters of support for Association Members
- Seeking out opportunities for grants and funding and completing all necessary applications
- Revised the organisations official documents with authorities
- Researching alternative and easier online payment platforms for WFTGA income
- Exploring income generating opportunities and partnerships
- Managing and sourcing membership benefits for our members
- Consultation surveys conducted with membership

➤ **Meetings/Seminars/Conferences**

- Regular attendance as both guest speaker/presenter and participant
- Industry meetings on best practice and research initiated
- Conducting and attending virtual meetings/seminars
- Member Association 2020 Journey Webinar series preparations

- Attendance to virtual trade shows
- Active participation on the ICCIRA Board as board member
- Actively participating as an Association member with ICCA

➤ **Partnerships and Projects**

- WFTA Online Culinary course promotion
- WFTA preparations for future and additional collaborations
- International Tourist guide day 2020 digital publication
- International Tourist guide day 2021 theme announcement preparation / 27th September World Tourism Day
- WFTGA 35 year birthday – project developmental phase
- Cultour card program promotion and management thereof
- Set up working group for WFTGA Health and Safety Protocols for tourist guides
- WFTGA Health and Safety Protocols submission to WTTC and ISO recognition

➤ **Training Division**

- Regular Training Committee virtual meetings are convened
- Drafting training contracts
- Completing cost breakdowns
- Overseeing of delivery of the contracts
- Updating of the database
- Monthly 'Training Matters' newsletter preparation, compilation and distribution
- Completing and signing training certificates and feedback letters (soon to move to digital)
- Keeping up to date records of the training division membership by conducting a 'monkey survey' data gathering exercise
- Preparations, costings and communications with the International Training Centres (Cyprus Training Centre/Armenia Training Centre)
- Conducting internal training/virtual sessions for WFTGA trainers
- Consultation surveys conducted with potential training participants

➤ **Technology and Communications/WFTGA Representation**

- The promotion of the Tourist Guide sector, WFTGA Organization and Training is ongoing
- Compiling Reports and Presentations
- WFTGA Website content updating
- Refreshment of all WFTGA logos, templates, additional branding opportunities and promotional materials
- Management and content generating of WFTGA Social media accounts (facebook, twitter, Instagram, you-tube, LinkedIn)
- Research and ultimate purchasing of technology to assist in the operations of the organization. These include digital tools such as *Invoicely, Diplomasafe, MonkeySurvey, Zoom Pro, MailChimp*
- Guidelines Internation@I publication preparations, contributions and distribution

- International Interviews and Tourist Guide related press activities
- Compiling press releases as and when needed
- Sharing of video messages with members
- Promotion and Marketing of the WFTGA Training Division and Courses
- WFTGA signed up to the "Tourism declares a Climate Emergency" initiative
- Consultation surveys conducted with membership

A reminder to refer to the Guidelines International@I Bulletins for further news and relevant information. Some of our achievements and activities are more tangible than others, but one thing we can vouch for is the incredible sense of family and collaboration that has emerged within the organisation during this unprecedented year. This is largely due to our active team of Area Representatives, our Global Brand Ambassadors, the Training Committee and our Executive Board.

In Conclusion

We are a highly functional team behind the scenes of WFTGA, working diligently as volunteers for our Association members and the WFTGA Family. We continue to raise the profile of the professional Tourist Guide.

Here are some testimonials of the key players making WFTGA work for you;



I am excited to be working with the dynamic team we have on this current Board of Directors. Each member truly knows the meaning of TEAMWORK while supporting one another as we do our best to serve our all-important associations/members. I am sure along the way we are going to some things that could upset some of our members but remember we are ALL in this together , to improve the continuous educational needs of our members and all important Tourism Industry.
 ~ Gene F. Reyes, III – Executive Board Member



When recalling my experience, the moment I decided to run for the position of the WFTGA Executive Board, it was my vision to be the representative of the far east. With the qualification and trust I gained from the member associations who voted for me, it became a challenge on myself on how I will deliver the results based on my vision and commitment. With these, I started to learn the operational side of WFTGA. What I admired most is the transition of the documents for continuity. Along the way, challenges were met. But with the strong desire to create solutions, these challenges became a learning opportunity for us to improve on our respective portfolios. Internally, with the supportive leadership of each other, goals are being accomplished, results are being delivered, thus success is being achieved.
 ~ Regards, Manu – Executive Board Member



had enough experience as a tourist guide and as a Manager or executive director in my country, Iran. But working with an international association and specially being one of the Executive Board member of "World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations" is another story.

Here, we are working together with our colleagues which any of them is from different background, culture and ability. Normally it could cause some various points of view which would not be so simple to make our aims available.

But, we try to be friends and support each other in all cases and issues. Here, we receive a lot of emails which to be read, vote for memberships, talk and discuss about how to solve current problems and how to figure out our future goals through face to face meeting, using Skype calls or writing in WhatsApp.

It is very excited but not so easy job.

~ Yours sincerely, Arash Nooraghayee – Executive Board Member



Being part of the WFTGA ExBo is an honour, full of inspiration and challenges alike.

I knew taking on the training portfolio would be a massive task. There are not enough hours in the day to answer all e-mails, let alone bring all the amazing projects to fruition. However, I enjoy every minute in the virtual presence of my hard-working colleagues from so many different backgrounds. Often we are learning on the job and from each other, calmly guided and firmly steered by our President.

All the best

~ Viola – Executive Board Member / Head of Training



Being involved in Training Committee in last few years and now in these challenging times, I have a feeling that we became more connected lately with on-line meetings almost every two weeks. The communication within the Committee is positive, open minded with a lot of discussions with achievable results. It's always a pleasure when working in this kind of environment.

Best wishes

~ Ivana – Training Committee member



As a member of training committee from day one, I found a professional group to work with. Friendly and experienced members make the committee a wonderful place to work volunteer. Cultural differences and long distance couldn't put down the productive meetings among us, while we learn from each other through our journey. Impartiality, open mind and democratic environment can make all communities easy and fruitful to work with.

~ Banafsheh Farahani – Training Committee member



I am honoured to serve as a member of WFTGA Training Committee since 2019. It was great pleasure to work with a team of professional tourist guide trainers. What I really like about working with colleagues in TC is the open atmosphere and the fact that it is very easy to communicate and exchange ideas. Even though it is a volunteer work, there are load of things to do. All the members take responsibility, get involved in the activities and there has been TC meeting almost every week to discuss ideas and take actions. I am humbled with the amount of joy and passion

shared in here and hope it is a way forward for our trainers and WFTGA to further enhance the image of our profession.

~ Mahdieh Jahangir Bolourchian (Madi) – Training Committee Member



My personal take as the first WFTGA Global Brand Ambassador since Nov 2017 has been a relevant one.

One important value I'm learning is the ability to care for others and it can come in different forms. It takes time to know different cultures on a global scale.

It takes an incredible amount of volunteer hours to build and create that connection so that the story of the brand becomes clear and compelling. The WFTGA is the vehicle for us to tell our story and reach all continents of the globe and become ambassadors of peace and goodwill.

Mahatma Gandhi once said "You must be the change you wish to See in the World "

~ Maricar Donato – Area Representative Co-ordinator and Global Brand Ambassador



"Working together to serve our customers best" is the name of the game.

From 2015 on, I worked on and with the EXBO of WFTGA as Treasurer. Since this time, a lot of improvements have taken for the benefit of our members. The team turned out high professional performance, the working climate is respectful, friendly, and target driven. We achieved a lot, but there is still room for improvement. It is a pleasure to be a member of this team.

~ Hermann Friedsam, co-opted Treasurer

The WFTGA executive board members would like to thank you, our members for their continued support and valuable contributions. We trust that the boards' open-door policy has proven beneficial to all our members and will continue as such.

Please stay in touch as member engagement on the official communication methods are a priority for us.

Preparing for Tomorrow, Together!



Stay safe, Stay Healthy, Keep Positive

Yours in Tourist Guiding,

Alushca Ritchie
WFTGA PRESIDENT
president@wftga.org

2019 – 2021 WFTGA Executive Board
Manu, Viola, Gene and Arash

WFTGA currently has the following social media platforms:

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/wftga> (only one official page)

Twitter: @WFTGAofficial

Instagram: wftga_official_

You Tube: WFTGA-official

Email: info@wftga.org

Acronyms: (for ease of reference)

ARs – Area Representatives

EXBO – Executive Board

FEG – European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations

HOT – Hands on Training

GBA – Global Brand Ambassador

ICCA – International Congress and Convention Association

ICCIRA – International Cultural and Creative Industries Regulatory Authority

ITG – International Tourist guides’ day

ITC – International Training centre

RFP – Request for proposal

TD – Training Division

TC – Training Committee

TtT – Train the Trainer / ITtT – International Train the Trainer

WFTA – World Food Travel Association

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNWTO – United Nations World Tourism Organisation