



WFTGA Press Backgrounder

World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations · The Global Voice of Professional Tourist Guides

For journalists and editors

WHO WE ARE

The **World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA)** is the global voice of professional tourist guides. Founded in 1985 and registered as an NGO in Vienna, Austria, WFTGA represents around **90 national associations** with more than **200,000 tourist guides in over 50 countries**. The Federation promotes high standards of training, ethics, sustainability and professional recognition, and advocates for qualified, locally licensed tourist guides worldwide. WFTGA is an Affiliate Member of UN Tourism and a partner of UNESCO initiatives.

Key facts

FOUNDED

1985 — registered NGO in Vienna, Austria

MEMBERS

≈90 national associations, 50+ countries

REPRESENTS

200,000+ professional tourist guides

RECOGNITION

Affiliate Member of UN Tourism; partner of UNESCO initiatives

STANDARDS

Code of Guiding Practice; international training programmes

EVENTS

Biennial International Convention; Int. Tourist Guide Day, 21 Feb

TOURIST GUIDE VS TOUR GUIDE

A distinction that matters in any reporting on our profession: a **tourist guide** is a qualified, locally licensed professional who interprets the cultural and natural heritage of a specific area — trained, examined and, in many countries, regulated by law. A *tour guide*, *tour leader* or *tour manager* accompanies a group logistically but does not hold this local qualification. WFTGA stands for the licensed, qualified profession. Full definition: wftga.org/about/tourist-guide-vs-tour-guide

WHAT WE STAND FOR

Quality and safety for visitors. Licensing and certification protect travellers and the destinations they visit.

Fair working conditions. An estimated 80% of tourist guides worldwide are women; professional recognition means economic participation.

Ethics and peace. Guides carry an ethical responsibility for truth, context and understanding — expressed in the Nagasaki Peace Declaration (2026) and the Code of Guiding Practice.

Sustainable tourism. Locally qualified guides are the backbone of responsible, community-based tourism, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



WFTGA Press Backgrounder

World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations · The Global Voice of Professional Tourist Guides

For journalists and editors

THE PRESIDENT



Sebastian Frankenger

President of WFTGA

Austrian tourist guide, internationally known and experienced from his political career in Germany, Sebastian Frankenger has led WFTGA as President since 2024 and was confirmed in office by the delegates in Japan in February 2026. He is available for interviews in English and German.

"The hand of friendship, stretched out to the world."

RECENT MILESTONES

February 2026 — International Convention, Fukuoka, Japan. Around 600 professional tourist guides from 50 nations gathered for a summit on professional sustainability and global tourism standards.

February 2026 — Nagasaki Peace Declaration. A peace ceremony with 1,000 paper cranes and a joint declaration on the ethical responsibility of tourist guides for truth, context and professional integrity.

February 2026 — New Executive Board elected, with President Sebastian Frankenger confirmed in office.

Ongoing — Advocacy for professional standards. Formal statements in support of tourist-guide licensing, most recently to the City of Montreal and the Republic of Bulgaria.

Press contacts

Sebastian Frankenger

President · interviews, statements, policy positions
Languages: English, German
president@wftga.org · +49 170 9323103

Emma Guest-Consales

Vice President · Public Relations Portfolio
Press enquiries, materials and image requests
vicepresident@wftga.org

We aim to respond to press enquiries within 24 hours. Interviews in person (Vienna), by video call or by phone · Time zone: CET/CEST. General enquiries: info@wftga.org. Press releases, images and materials: [wftga.org/services/press](https://www.wftga.org/services/press) — all content may be republished free of charge with attribution to WFTGA.