



SKÅL

SKÅL
MAGAZINE 276

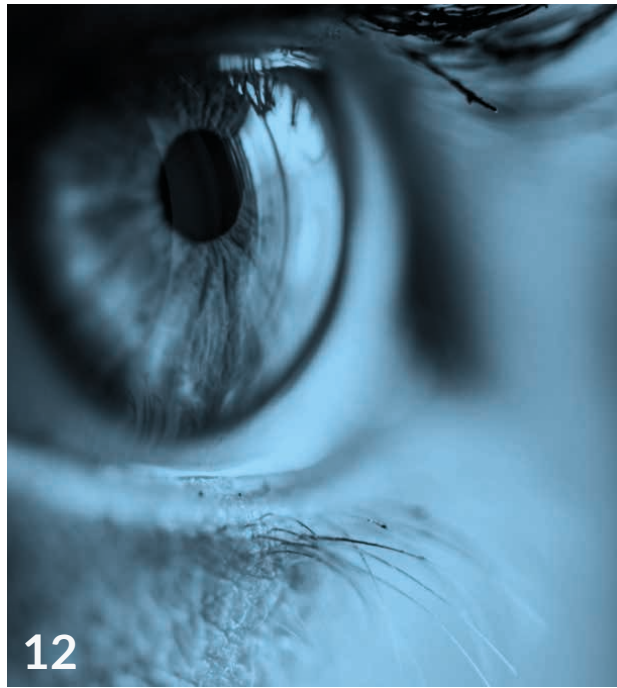
DECEMBER 2019

INTERNATIONAL
Connecting Tourism Globally



STRENGTH THROUGH COLLABORATION





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SKÅL MAGAZINE 276

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Everyone,

There is a kind of rush all over the world, one of positive energy resonating amongst Skålleagues living the Skål brand and spreading the excitement and good news of our prestigious organization.

It has been an eventful year and one in which many positive changes have been made.

CHANGES FOR GROWTH

After many years, **membership has stabilized** and we have not witnessed dramatic spiking of membership gain and no dramatic downturn on membership loss this past year. **New clubs have opened globally** especially Port Harcourt, Nigeria that has been the first new club in many years formed in Africa as well as the new club of San Juan in Argentina! There is exponential growth in India where many new clubs have opened, the latest one being the Mysore Club.

Skål International has created a footprint in new tourism giants like Russia and China, the Skål Club of St. Petersburg was officially opened in February of this year and the start of many new clubs in China effective Jan 2020. Skål Europe celebrated their Union in Rome in November and exciting new developments are in place for the proposed growth in Africa.

The introduction of **co-exhibiting at our Skål Stands** was seen at the two largest travel and trade shows this year, ITB Berlin and WTM London. Bigger stands mean more visibility, better locations as well as an income for Skål International. Negotiations and barter agreements are ongoing between Skål and the large travel and trade shows globally and the outcomes of these discussions will be relayed to members in due course. We have also stipulated that Skål International will have the opportunity to have a keynote speaker or forum speaker at each of the trade shows we are represented at which will allow even more visibility to the speaker and Skål for months before the event.

A **dynamic, more relevant Skål logo** was introduced this year which has enhanced the image of Skål International and the **first phase of the #YouCanTwo** membership campaign was launched with the second phase being rolled out in 2020.

Our Congress of significant changes was launched on The Symphony of the seas in September and this meant shorter Annual General Assembly time, more effective business forums and opportunities to discuss success stories as well as challenges faced by members.

Our **Membership Development Fund** has assisted clubs all over the world with their membership drives and membership retaining and the first 'Destination of the Year' sponsorship campaign was launched with Nepal being the first partner.

Memorandum of Understandings were signed between Skål International and PATA (Pacific Asia Travel Association) and UFTAA (Universal Federation of Travel Agents Association) and Skål International now occupies a seat on the board of UNWTO Affiliated Members.

While all of these events were taking place, the much-awaited **Digital Transformation Project** has been tried and tested so that it can be implemented on 1 of January 2020.

STRENGTH THROUGH COLLABORATION

For me the success of 'Strength through Collaboration', my presidential theme, was evident in many aspects and areas of our organization and this has made me feel very proud to have been your World President. Just like 20/20 is considered excellent eyesight, let us all enter 2020 with a bright, clear and complete vision.

In today's fluid economy, the most credible expression of who you are and what you have to offer are your relationships, nothing else compares.

The dynamic of our society and particularly our economy will be defined by inter dependence and inter connectivity. While individualism may have ruled much of the 19th century, community and alliances will rule the 21st century and with the digital era, there is no reason to live and work in isolation.

Networking through shared passions!

You are a brand and **to be a successful brand you have got to become relentlessly focused on what you do that adds value.**

Membership to Skål International addresses all these points.

A reminder of why you are members of the largest travel and tourism organization globally and one that

represents each sector of our dynamic industry:

- You are never alone when you travel.
- You have immediate access to talent, knowledge and expertise from your fellow members.
- Financial security in times of need.
- Visibility at important trade shows without cost.
- Be part of a global family.
- Your small investment will reap large returns.

As the year comes to an end, may you all have time to relax, refocus and refresh so that you are ready for another challenging new year.

Regards and Skål!

"LIVE THE SKÅL BRAND CONSTANTLY AND CONSISTENTLY."



MERRY CHRISTMAS

FROM YOUR

PRESIDENT ELECT 2020



To all
Skålleagues Worldwide,

Meri Kirihimete

*(Merry Christmas in
Te Reo Maori language)*

Wishing you,

**Happiness, (Haikoa)
Good Health (Tuhauora)
Friendship (Whakahoahoa)
Long Life (Mauri ora)**

I always feel like a child again when Christmas comes around. You know what that means...

Let's all get up to some holiday mischief!

They say "It's all fun and games until Santa checks the naughty list..."

Let's hope he wasn't paying close attention to any of us this year!

Thanks for being such a great Skål friends, it's been fun spending time with a lot of you over the year.

Here's to a fabulous 2020!

With love to all.

Cheers

Peter Morrison
Skål President Elect 2020
New Zealand



MERRY
Christmas
& a happy
2020

*Warmest thoughts and best wishes
for a wonderful Christmas and
a Happy New Year!*

*Daniela Otero, CEO
and the Skål International Secretariat*

NOTE FROM THE CEO

DECEMBER: A TIME TO LOOK BACK ON THE YEAR



Daniela Otero
CEO

The end of the year is quickly approaching, and we all enjoy looking back and reflecting on the personal and professional events that have taken place. This is an interesting practice, since it is always a good idea to reflect on what has happened, weighing different experiences, and considering what we have learned.

This year has been an incredibly productive one for our organisation; when we look back over the past twelve months, our assessment should be quite positive. Undoubtedly, we have made great progress.

Thanks to our members, the organisation has progressed through a crossroads of visions and hopes for teamwork. This is very positive, since working together allows us to invest more effort and to focus our energy, leading to infinitely better results.

Often during this time of the year, the emphasis is placed solely on analysing the achieved results according to yearly planning – and that is ok. It is a valid way of measuring the impact achieved and the goals attained.

Having said that, organisations are made up of people and so, while considering all of these necessary reports that detail year-end measurements and results, we should also acknowledge that all of this was achieved thanks to those individuals who have taken the initiative and supported the organisation's different actions.

That's why I would like to begin by thanking our members. Without a doubt, it is these members of this fabulous organisation who work passionately and tirelessly in every city to grow our member network on a global level.

My warmest thanks to you all!

Thanks to your work, our organisation is, without a doubt, kinder and more humane! Thank you for your dedication and time devoted to strengthening and growing this wonderful network that brings together professionals in the tourism sector from across the globe.

I would like to make special mention and offer my most heartfelt gratitude to the entire team at the General Secretariat. This year has been very intense, and they have made great efforts to complete their everyday tasks while also undertaking additional work related to the digital transformation process.

If I were to define this year with a single quote, it would have to be:

” *What divides us pales in comparison to what unites us*

- Ted Kennedy -

My warmest wishes, happy holidays and Skål!

Daniela Otero
CEO

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER

Denise Scrafton
Councillor,
Skål International Australia

Vice President of the Skål International Council



Season's Greetings to all fellow Skålleagues around the world,

I am the International Skål Councillor for Australia and also Vice President of the International Council.

Over recent years, the Council has been working towards creating a Skål that meets the vision of all our members. Of course, expectations of members differ, with some wanting a prosperous and vital local club and other members looking for more from the national and international membership with worthwhile business opportunities. In addition, it is vital that we continue to grow quality membership, run first class Congresses with top notch social and business opportunities and at the same time continue our mantra of friendship in business.

Since the Executive Committee and International Skål Council have been running their mid years meetings in the same location, culminating with a joint meeting on that last day, we have collectively been able to move our projects forward. We have finalised the new and improved format for Congress, introduced the new Membership Development Fund which is assisting globally with membership growth and we continue to finalise, Speakers Group, Exchange Program, work with Spain to enhance Trade Shows opportunities for Skålleagues and of course continue to support the very important Florimond Volckaert Fund.

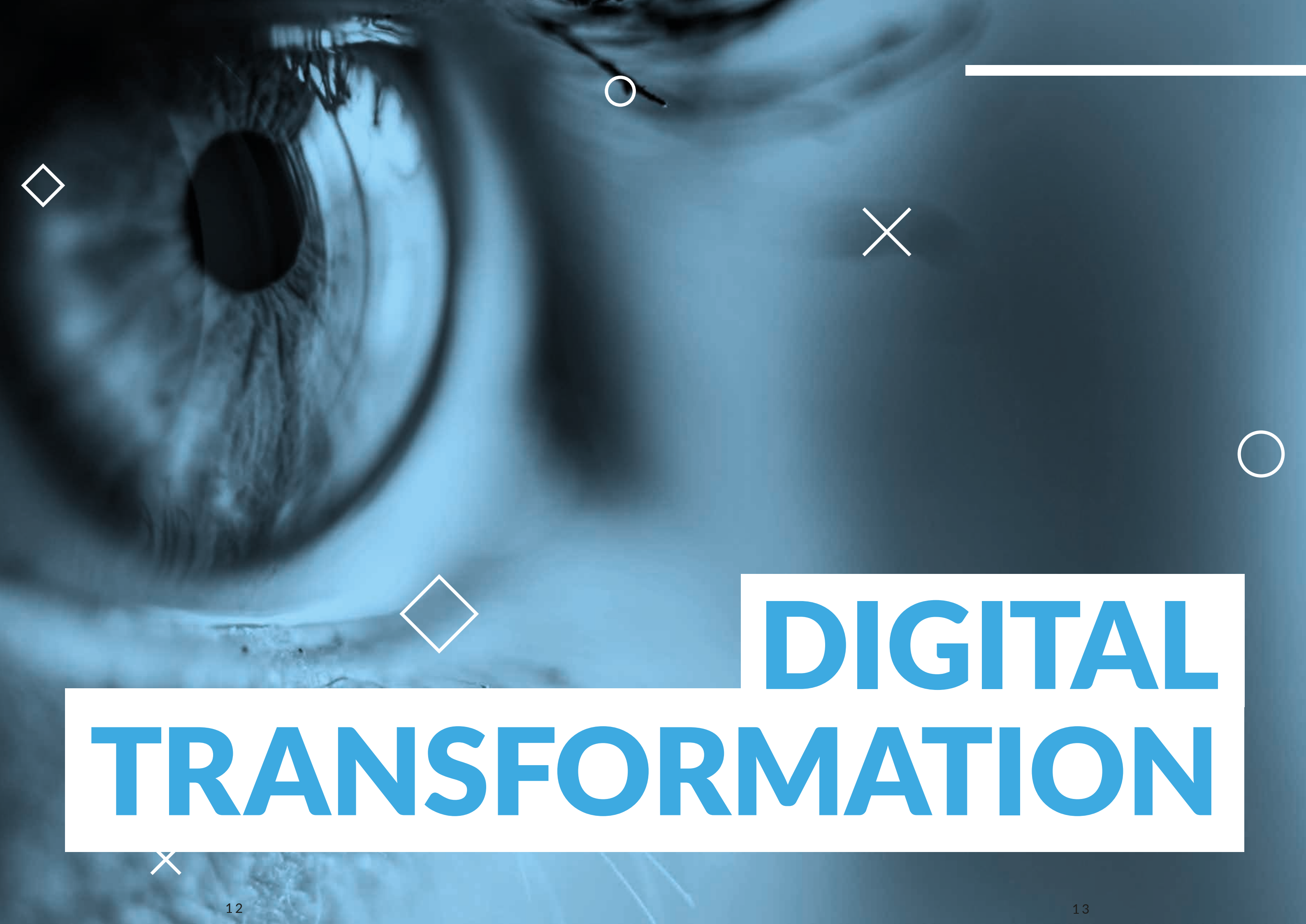
I am extremely proud of our Skål International network in Australia. Our membership hovers around 1000 members, with 23 clubs and 3 of those now over 100 members being Cairns, Perth and Hobart. We hold two National Meetings per year and have 100% attendance of all club representation. The Australian attendance at Congress is generally between 50-120 members depending on the congress destination. Our communications are regular and we recently included our fellow Skål Oceania clubs to participate in our news articles with a view to working closer with each other in the region.

Australia expects to have a large delegation in Croatia and we certainly look forward to meeting our fellow Skålleagues from around the world.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!

Yours in Skål

Denise Scrafton
ic@skal.org.au



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

SAVE THE DATE

1/1/2020

On January 1, 2020 the first stage of the Digital Transformation of Skål International will become a reality.

BETTER SERVICES AND TOOLS

Clubs, National Committees and Members will be able to enjoy new tools and functionalities, which will provide new ways of working and collaborating that are much more agile, digital and adapted to the new times.

Each and every one of you - Clubs, National Committees and Members - are key pieces for the success of this Transformation. We will need your collaboration and understanding before any inconveniences arise at the start of this new stage. The new tool is very extensive and complex; therefore during the first months of set up, it is expected that processes and contents will need to be adjusted. This is why we want to thank you in advance for all your patience and understanding.

We want to share with you the benefits and advantages of the new system.

We are convinced that it will be a great change for our organization.

ADVANTAGES FOR CLUBS & NATIONAL COMMITTEES

GREATER CONNECTIVITY & BETTER COMMUNICATION

- You may set up relationships in a very simple way, thanks to the Skålegas search template.
- The new Chat will allow you to contact other people in charge of National Clubs and Committees.

GREATER AGILITY & AUTONOMY

- The process of registering new members will be much simpler and faster.
- New Online Payment system for National Clubs and Committees!
- The Club may update a more detailed profile of the members of its Club and/or National Committee.

UNIQUE VISION OF SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

- We make a corporate website in WordPress available to you.
- The news published in WordPress of National Clubs or Committees will also be published on the Skål International website.
- Event publishing will also take place on the Skål International and WordPress Club websites.
- Corporate letterheads and business cards for official use.
- New integration with social networks to promote content distribution.

PROCESS OPTIMIZATION & AUTOMATION

- The Payment Process has been optimized to facilitate monitoring and control.
- You may view approval flows and receive notifications by mail.
- You will have mass email sending functionalities.



ADVANTAGES FOR MEMBERS

- You will be more and better connected thanks to the Skåleagues search engine.
- The new Interactive Map will allow you to search for Clubs around the world.
- You will always be informed and be aware of all the events worldwide with the Global Event Calendar.
- You will have a new training platform with specific Tourism Sector courses for professionals.
- New optional functionality of Online Payment for Clubs and/or National Committees.
- The process of registering new members will be much simpler and faster.
- You may also modify and update your profile at any time.

In the coming days, and mainly in the month of January, both members and Officers will receive access to tutorials to start the training process on the new tool.

Thank you for making the Digital Transformation of Skal International a reality!



OCTOBER
2020
81ST SKÅL
INTERNATIONAL
WORLD
CONGRESS

Welcome to the Kvarner Region, the pleasant climate region where you can enjoy nature and culture, and much more, all year-round – We are Croatia's best kept secret!

It is a great pleasure to be your host during the 81st Skål International World Congress from 15th to 20th October 2020 in Kvarner Region – in Rijeka, European Capital of Culture and Opatija, the Cradle of Croatian tourism. The Kvarner region offers the unique combination of a stunning coast, islands and inland highland area plus an excellent geographical location.

Kvarner encompasses the coastal areas of Opatija, Rijeka, Crikvenica and the islands of Krk, Rab, Cres and Lošinj alongside the mountainous hinterland of Gorski kotar. This is the region where Croatian tourism started as early as the 19th century, when it was a holiday destination for the Austro-Hungarian nobility.

The facilities in our region are both extensive and of high quality: we have beautiful hotels in many styles from boutique and eclectic to grand elegance. A wide range of sailing boats and luxury yachts is available for visitors, there are stylish apartments and villas, both in the countryside and on the coast, surrounded by pristine natural environment. As a result of so much choice, the Kvarner region is acknowledged as a well established and truly worthy tourist destination.

Diversity is beautiful is how we are known: it is what our residents know and what our visitors discover. The motto of the region stands for a wealth of distinct locations which are offered to our visitors; the coast, the islands and the mountains provide for a variety and a great experience of nature – from walking, hiking and cycling to playing tennis, swimming in crystal-clear sea, sailing, diving.... Enjoyable daytrips, historical sightseeing tours, cultural events and culinary hotspots will all make great memories.

Visitors to the region in 2020 will have the opportunity to discover why Kvarner has been named one of the world's top regions for travellers in 2020 by world-leading travel authority Lonely Planet. Also, 2020 is the year when Croatia takes the Presidency of the European Union and when Rijeka holds the coveted title of European Capital of Culture – a rather beautiful and memorable coincidence. Kvarner hosting of the Skål International World Congress in 2020 makes an already special year an even more special one for us.

By Irena Peršić Živadinov, Ph.D.
President, Skål International Kvarner

Visit Congress
Webpage



Razvan Pirjol
Skål International
Bucharest, Romania



Left to right: Razvan Pirjol – Past President Skål International Bucharest, current Secretary of State for Tourism; Calin Ile – Skål International Bucharest member, President Romanian Hotel Federation; Florin Tancu – President Skål International Bucharest, General Director WECO Travel Romania.

Skål International Bucharest is proud to announce the appointment of its Skålleague [Razvan Pirjol as a Secretary of State for Tourism in Romanian Government.](#)

Emil-Răzvan Pîrjol, former General Manager of the hotel division of Niro, as well as of the Suter Palace, the most luxurious hotel in Romania, is the new head of Romanian tourism, after being appointed State Secretary in the Ministry Economy, Energy and Business Environment. Pîrjol has as priorities a more efficient promotion of Romania, as a tourist destination, solving the labor force problem in Tourism and stimulating the education in the field and the integration in the industry of the graduates in the field.

Razvan graduate and act as a former director of the Glion Institute of Higher Education (GIHE) in Switzerland, one of the first higher education institutions specialized in hotel management worldwide.

Răzvan Pîrjol obtained his Tourism license at the Glion Hotel Institute in Switzerland. With 15 years' experience in the field, a speaker of 5 languages, he founded “Leading Choice”, a consulting company

Between 2012 and 2017, Razvan was Skål International Bucharest President, helping our Club to develop on a certain stage.

Skål Bucharest Club is very proud to know that one of its members will be responsible for the destiny of this important field of activity.

THE REVIVAL OF SKÅL INTERNATIONAL CÔTE D'AZUR

BY NICOLLE MARTIN
PRESIDENT, SKÅL INTERNATIONAL
CÔTE D'AZUR

Success
Corner



With the new President Nicolle Martin the Club which had only 9 members counts today 80 active members.

On September 12, we celebrated a double anniversary: the **86 years of the Skål Côte d'Azur**, created in August 1933 by the Founding President Camille Mathez and the first year of the election of the President on a famous beach of Nice at a very successful evening with 80 participants.

The trust shown by the tourism professionals is the result of this great progress. Every Skålleague boasts the merits of Skål International Côte d'Azur with success.

We have professionals not only from Nice but also from other cities in the department.

We are proud today to have 80 active players whose average age is 40.

We received with great emotion the **Platinum Award for achieving the highest net increase in new members in 2019**.

Skål Côte d'Azur becomes an unavoidable Club and some professionals want to participate in this great adventure.

Tourism has been in our genes for many years and our expertise and experience in this area have helped us to revive the Club of the Côte d'Azur.

This first year has been a wonderful experience. One year of meetings, events, contacts.

Skål has participated in 56 events during this past year with a networking event during which all the participants do business in friendship.

We have organized seven meetings with great success in prestigious places where Skålleagues and future members participate.

Everyday we bring new contacts who are not long in joining us in this great adventure represented by Skål International.

We have a great synergy between the Clubs of Var-Provence, Monaco, Sanremo and Paris. We meet regularly and share our experiences.

I participated in the 1st Skål European Congress with the creation of Skål Europe Network and also at the Rome Skål Days, a wonderful opportunity to meet my European counterparts.

I have the support of trade shows related to tourism such as Food Tech Hotel and Agecotel who offer us a stand on their show and visibility in their catalog.

I also have the support of the Alpes Maritimes Departmental Council.

The specialized media are also involved in each of our operations.

In conclusion, I am a happy President who intends to make progress in the coming months with the help of our office and all our Skålleagues whom I thank for their support and their trust.

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL BANGKOK

CLUB OF THE YEAR
2018/2019

During the 80th Skål World Congress in Miami, Thailand's Bangkok Club won the Club of the Year Award 2018/2019.

Skål International News asked President Andrew J Wood for his insight into winning the coveted award...



Skål International Bangkok President Andrew J Wood with Director of Events Pichai Visutriratana proudly holding the Michael O'Flynn Perpetual Trophy for winners of CLUB OF THE YEAR. The club also wins a free double registration for the 2020 Skål World Congress in Kvarner, Croatia.

Q: What is your "recipe for success"?

A: To be honest Club of the Year wasn't a set objective for the exco. The Bangkok Club had had a difficult few years with falling membership and we wanted to reverse that trend and be able to once again stand proud and tall among our travel and tourism peers.

We wanted to make membership development our No.1 priority and put the club back onto a firm footing with great membership engagement and providing outstanding must-attend events.

From there it was a natural progression to make the club administratively stronger and efficient. In the past we had often paid our membership fees late and had a fairly laissez faire attitude where we just let things happen rather than setting goals and plans. That has very much changed!

The new exco were voted in on 28th March 2018 for a 2 year term. It was my second time as club President having been President in 2008-10. From the outset in 2018 I set a target of increasing membership from 27 to 100 members. My rationale was simple... Bangkok is one of the most visited cities in the world with over 20 million tourists each year, it therefore should be one of the bigger clubs in the world of Skål International.

It quickly become apparent that the team I had built to drive the club forward had enormous capacity and skills to achieve great things. They are committed and didn't mind going the extra mile when needed.

The team were mostly new to the board with few pre-existing hang ups. Our board meetings are focussed and the nine man team contribute great ideas with a can do attitude.

I had learnt from experience that as President I need to set goals and give direction; each director received early on a note from me outlining their areas of responsibilities and duties. Flexibility was key, especially due to the volunteer nature of Skål International. With work pressures and business travel, not everyone could donate the same amount of time each month.

Another key strategy I had learnt from hard experience was take time to plan. Instead of scrambling each month to organise a venue for meetings simply take time to make a list of potential venues and start the process early. For variety we choose different venues each month, a mix of sit-down lunches or more informal and relaxed evening networking cocktail parties. The key criteria is the venue must be capable of offering a high standard of food and beverage service; in a comfortable setting, in an easily accessible location preferable near the skytrain, and MOST importantly, they must be a member of our club.

We found that guest speakers at cocktail events in Thailand doesn't work. Members are more interested to talk to each other. We therefore only plan to have guest speakers at sit-down lunches and for 20 minutes max (we are very strict with timings for lunches and aim to finish at 1.30-2.00pm) to allow members to get back to work. We encourage venues to showcase their best efforts, it becomes competitive as venues (particularly hotels) try to out-do each other. Not a bad thing considering our members are major influencers in the travel and tourism industry.

By investing a small amount of time in planning venues we quickly build up a 12 MONTH PLAN which pays dividends for an easier life.

The same can be said also for having standard letters with pictures for use by venues and also sponsor request letters. Once a venue expresses an interest to host one of our meetings, and after inspection, discussion and agreeing on dates, the venue receives an email from the club detailing "What we require" along with pictures of room layouts and signage and all requirements for holding a successful Skål International meeting. This includes information on updating the venue with numbers of bookings on a regular basis and also we give clear precise payment details (on the day immediately after the event has finished).

The same pre-planning applies to membership. Tom Sorensen our membership director, through trial and error, found the best way for prospective members to navigate joining the club and developed simple straightforward emails to streamline the whole process. In the past it was hard to join the club, we wanted to make it fast, easy and efficient.

The Bangkok Club won the Gold award for Skål Club membership increase in 2019, which was also presented at the Miami World Congress.

Bangkok Events Director Pichai Visutriratana received the award on behalf of the club.

The club had increased its membership by 155% since last year and continues to grow by approx 4 new members per month. Today our membership growth is 192%.

Q. How does your club attract new members and how do you retain these members?

A: The exco through their own business networks are always tuned-in to new opportunities especially new arrivals into the Bangkok Travel and Tourism arena. Trawling the local travel media with our 'radar' switched on to new recruitment opportunities as we read articles and travel news is another way. We particularly like details of people on the move.

We looked at our membership mix and tried to focus on areas with fewer members like airlines and media.

We also looked at past members list. Although this had limited success with many 'old' members having reloacted out of the area/country.

“
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For retention we found we needed to really engaged with members and ensure they attend as many meetings as possible to get the most benefit from their membership. As a team the exco all try to spend a few minutes at each meeting having quality one-on-one discussions with that member and their business.

Q. What methods do you implement in your club that encourages attendance to your monthly functions and keeps this excitement and participation alive?

A: I think we have touched on aspects of this already. I would also add that our events are growing ever more popular, with our eye for detail and event excellence and good sponsors. Care of our members is paramount. They are our colleagues AND our friends.

Q. Does your club have any extraordinary project that you are working on at present?

A: We just completed our Annual Christmas Charity fundraiser. We joined forces with the PATA Thailand Chapter. It's our biggest event of the year - raising substantial contributions for our nominated charities.

This year we had 140 pax attend and it will be time to start planning it all over again!

During the World Cruise, Skål Thailand wanting to give back to needy causes, picked a Honduras poor school to visit. As another project I would like to join forces with our other Thailand clubs to do something similar next year, but this time do it closer to home with schools in Thailand.

I firmly believe that a strong local media presence and a diverse social media footprint generates membership demand and interest. Good PR and Communications is essential.

Q. How do you promote the many membership benefits to your members and prospective members?

A: We have a very active Facebook page where we constantly remind members of the truly global nature of our association "wherever you travel you'll have a friend in Skål International" and our recruitment collateral uses a strong brand benefit message and specifically identifies membership benefits locally, regionally and globally.

Q. How do you promote Young Skål to prospective members and to your membership base?

A: Much of our energy developing this category of membership has recently moved away from students to young professionals, who are more likely to attend our events and have greater club longevity.

My target is to have 15-20% YS membership in the club and rather than have separate meetings to instead fully integrate them into our monthly meetings. They tend to favour evening events more.

Finally I would like to say the success of a club can never be about one person. I am immensely proud of our executive committee. The club is blessed to have a hard working team who, as I mentioned previously, don't mind going the extra mile to achieve great things for the Club and our members. All their hard work has paid off and we have many great plans for the future.

By Andrew J Wood
President, Skål International Bangkok



Board Members of SKAL International Bangkok 2018-2020



Board members of Skål International Bangkok ←



SKÅL INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS WINNERS

The winners of the Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards 2019 were announced during the Opening Ceremony of the Skål World Congress held on 15 September on board the Symphony of the Seas.



ANURAK COMMUNITY LODGE

THAILAND | [VIDEO](#) | [WEB](#)

Winner of the Rural Accommodation category 2019

Anurak Community Lodge in southern Thailand, is an award-winning eco-retreat for active lifestyle visitors who respect nature and local community traditions. The 20-key lodge offers Deluxe Green, Eco Double, Eco Twin, and Deluxe Jungle Tent options. Surrounded by spectacular limestone karst scenery, the lodge is an ideal base to explore adjacent Khao Sok National Park and majestic Chiew Larn Lake.

Since opening in 2016, Anurak has been **guided by the principles of reducing, reusing, and recycling**. Key aspects of its sustainability commitment include banning of single-use plastic and styrofoam and the creation of a recycling station and composting zone. Grey water from the laundry is filtered and used on the ecolodge's "Rainforest Rising" project, which, over the long-term, will return 3,300 square metres of oil palm plantation to native vegetation cover.

The Travelife Gold Certified lodge offers a range of ecotourism packages from two to four nights. Activities include hiking, rafting, kayaking, forest cooking, and boat trips on nearby Cheow Larn lake, with its spectacular limestone cliffs rising sheer from the water's surface.



COLOMBIA EXÓTICA

COLOMBIA | [VIDEO](#) | [WEB](#)

Winner of the 2019 Educational Programs and Media Award

We're the travel agency **Colombia Exótica**, tour operator in the second most biodiverse country in the world: Colombia! Worldwide, this country is top of the list in birds and orchids, second in variety of plants, amphibians, butterflies and freshwater fish, third in palms and reptiles; and one of the 21 countries with two oceanfronts: Atlantic and Pacific.

Colombia has some of the most diverse ethnicities in South America: 102 aboriginal peoples, 3 Afro-descendant groups and one Roma group. Being a strategic place of transit, where the north and south of the Americas come together, among many other factors, make us a privileged nation both naturally and culturally speaking, and have led us to innovate and create our own Science, natural, community and special interest tourism.

Following our essence of conscientious travel, we invite education and research institutions, as well as nature lovers, to discover our country and take a better look, putting the thousand-year-old traditional knowledge of our communities together with the knowledge of local, national and international scientists and researchers, through Samay experiences.

“Samay” is a very spiritual word for our aboriginal tribe, the Ingas, from the Putumayo region. Samay is considered a way of giving power and knowledge, the capacity to connect with the spirits of every living being in Mother Earth from our hearts, to learn and live together in harmony. This is how we go beyond the physical in our trips, so as to connect with nature’s spirits, aiming towards fair, responsible and sustainable travel.



HIMALAYAN ECOTOURISM

GREAT HIMALAYAN NATIONAL PARK, INDIA | [VIDEO](#) | [WEB](#)

Winner of the Tour Operators and Travel Agents category 2019

The Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) is a unique and essential conservation area in the Western Himalayas, in the District of Kullu, Himachal Pradesh. Himalayan Ecotourism has emerged the missing ingredient to make the GHNP and its buffer zone a successful model of conservation through the social and economic empowerment of the local community.

When the GHNP was established in 1999, the locals lost their right over the protected area and hence they suffered an important loss of income. This, in turn, appeared to jeopardize the conservation efforts as it has alienated the local community.

Six years ago, a few dozen of locals and a couple of professionals decided to bring ecotourism as a real and consistent alternate source of income. Himalayan Ecotourism was born.

A cooperative was established with 65 locals, all experienced trekking staff, and suddenly all owners of their society. This has brought a big change, not only for the cooperative members, but also for all people trekking the GHNP with us. Everyone can now visit the outstanding GHNP in the joyful company of the locals, proud of their National Park and who even have undertaken new conservation projects in the area. Himalayan Ecotourism is an innovative model of social enterprise that uses tourism opportunities to support sustainable development.



ALIMARA HOTEL

SPAIN | [VIDEO](#) | [WEB](#)

Winner of the 2019 Urban Accommodation Award

Alimara Hotel, Barcelona: the city at your feet. Located in the uptown area of Barcelona, the Alimara Barcelona Hotel, whose name refers to the fire which used to be lit at high points to guide travelers, allows its guests to experience and see the city from a different perspective.

Specializing in corporate services, the Alimara Barcelona Hotel has been designed to offer one of the most outstanding hall options in the City of Counts, with 26 different spaces around the hotel garden, which are suitable for meetings, seminars, conventions and social events of different formats.

With a view to continuing to innovate in events planning, the Executive Training & Gastronomy experiences have been created, aimed specially at companies and corporations to offer them the chance to add value to their team meetings and events, so as to work on the skills and abilities of different professionals.

Committed to its environment, the Alimara Barcelona Hotel intends to progress in terms **sustainable and responsible development** in order to make sure that the culture, landscapes and essence of Barcelona can be enjoyed in the future.



NILVA ENOTURISM

SPAIN | [VIDEO](#) | [WEB](#)

Winner of the 2019 Nature and Biodiversity Award

The company **Nilva Enoturism** heads the Manilva Vineyard Recovery Project (Málaga, Spain). Traditionally, this Western Costa del Sol city's economy has been based on vineyard growing. As a result of its urban growth in the last 25 years, much of the existing vineyard surfaces have disappeared. Here at Nilva, we believe the tourism development of sunny and beach areas is compatible with the protection of vineyards, its greatest natural heritage and a sign of the identity of the Andalusian and Mediterranean people.

In addition to wine production, **enoturism or wine tourism is a key element** in the Project. Nilva Enoturism, SL manages the Manilva Vineyard Interpretation Center (CIVIMA), a museum space with a tour across the past, present and future of viticulture in Manilva. There are guided tours around the CIVIMA, Winery, Moscatel wine tastings, and a surprising old Peñoncillo vineyard, with a spectacular unique landscape by the Mediterranean Sea.

By producing **top quality wine and developing such as a sustainable kind of tourism** as Enoturism, we can make Manilva a reference in the wine and first class travel sectors.



PERIYAR TIGER RESERVE

INDIA | [VIDEO](#) | [WEB](#)

Winner of the Community and Government Projects category 2019

Periyar Tiger Reserve is one among the most famous Protected Area not only in India but in the world and is located in the High Ranges. With an extent of 925 sq. km, the Periyar Tiger Reserve forms the largest and oldest wildlife sanctuaries of Kerala. It is situated in Idukki and Pathanamthitta and Kottayam districts. The park has exclusive tourist zone for nature education and interpretation for visitor. Nearly seven lakhs tourists visit the park annually.

Tourism Values of Periyar Tiger Reserve

The PTR is one of the globally accepted tourism destination. Apart from providing revenue to the government, Periyar Tiger Reserve provides livelihood to hundreds of people living in and around the tiger reserve. Every year about 7 lakhs tourists visit the park. The tourism values of PTR is also depends on its catchment, Subsistence Cultural, social educational and aesthetic components.

Importance of Ecotourism in PTR

It has been realized that concerted efforts towards environmental security and conservation of biodiversity can become more effective, if there is an overall appreciation and satisfaction by the visitors. The aesthetic values of the Protected Area can be utilized in a manner which effectively conveys the rationale behind creation of the PA and generate good will towards forests, wildlife and management. An effective communication between tourism in PA and people is required to succeed this task.



SEE TURTLES

U.S.A. | [VIDEO](#) | [WEB](#)

Winner of the Marine and Coastal category 2019

SEE Turtles is a unique non-profit that saves sea turtles through sustainable travel and fundraising. Launched in 2008, we have taken more than 1,300 people to volunteer more than 5,000 work shifts around Latin America and the Caribbean. Our trips and programs have raised more than US \$1 million for turtle conservation and coastal communities in places like Costa Rica, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Belize. Our Billion Baby Turtles program has provided more than US \$350,000 in grants to more than 20 important nesting beaches around the world, helping to save more than 2 million baby turtles.

Our biggest program, **Too Rare To Wear**, works to educate travellers and the travel industry to help end demand for tortoiseshell products. These products, although illegal in most places, continue to be sold around the world, threatening the critically endangered hawksbill sea turtle. Our coalition of more than 100 tourism businesses and 50 conservation organizations has reached more than 10 million people, provided grants to help study and combat this trade around the world, and has released ground breaking reports on this trade. Our Guide To Recognizing Turtle-shell has been translated into 5 languages and is available for free. Learn more at TooRareToWear.org.



THE SOUTH AFRICAN ANIMAL SANCTUARY ALLIANCE

SOUTH AFRICA | [VIDEO](#) | [WEB](#)

Winner of the Major Tourist Attractions category 2019

SAASA consists of Monkeyland, Birds of Eden and Jukani Wildlife Sanctuary in Plettenberg Bay (The Garden Route, Western Cape) and Monkeyland KZN in Ballito, KwaZulu Natal. Our sanctuaries practice responsible wildlife tourism. Our sanctuaries are HANDS-OFF tourist attractions and we use the money we raise from tours to care for the 4000+ birds, primates, apex cats and other wildlife living at our sanctuaries.

SAASA makes a huge impact in **changing the way people think about wild animals in tourism**. We encourage all people to support #truesanctuaries and to shun wildlife interaction.

Many places offer the opportunity for wildlife selfies and wildlife interaction. Wild animals don't like noisy, chaotic environments, and they most definitely don't like to be harassed and passed on from tourist to tourist. We actively fight for #animalrightsintourism by educating our visitors about the harmful pet-play-and-pay practices they should stay clear of – together we CAN make a difference.

Fun facts: Monkeyland in Plettenberg Bay is the World's 1st free roaming multi-species primate sanctuary and Birds of Eden is the World's largest free-flight single dome bird aviary.

Follow the hashtags #HandsOffOurWildlife #saasavisit #SayNoToWildlifeInteraction #EducationIsKey and #SAASA to learn more about our wonderful sanctuaries.



Congratulations to the winners and thank you for your passion, contribution and dedication to our industry!

MEET THE NEW 2020 SKÅL INTERNATIONAL USA LEADERSHIP TEAM

Skål International U.S.A. has held its annual elections and will be moving forward on executing a comprehensive membership development strategy in coordination with the new program release called the 'Digital Transformation' initiated by Skål International with input from its national committees and member clubs.

Newly elected officers are, **David Ryan**, Skål Sacramento, President; **Holly Powers**, Skål Boston, International Skål Councilor, **Arthur Allis**, Skål Tucson, Vice President Finance; **Jim Dwyer**, Skål Northern New Jersey, Vice President Membership; **Richard Scinta**, Skål Orlando, Vice President Administration; **Tom Moulton**, Skål Tucson, Vice President Public Relations and Communications; **Celeste Lupercio**, Skål Kansas City, Membership Director; **Morgan Maravich**, Skål Washington DC, Membership Director; and **Joanne Ford**, Skål Nashville, Auditor.

“2019 was active and successful year for Skål USA and our 48 member clubs” says Lisa Conway, Skål USA President. “Skål Boston and Chicago both celebrated their 80th Anniversary, Philadelphia celebrated its 65th Anniversary, while Skål Puerto Rico and Skål Tampa Bay celebrated their 60th year.

We also proudly hosted Skål members from around the world for our North American Skål Congress, hosted by Skål Hawaii in Honolulu, as well as the Skål World Congress onboard the Royal Caribbean Symphony of the Seas, hosted by Skål Miami.

Anticipated activities for 2020 will include a winter Executive Committee meeting in January hosted by Skål New Orleans, a North American Skål Congress in Winnipeg, Canada in the spring, and in coordination with Skål International, the new Digital Transformation program execution. This program will include a new branding and communication strategy to be implemented by Skål USA and its clubs and expanded efforts engaging the USA travel industry on communicating the benefits of also being a Skål International USA member.

2020 incoming President David Ryan, a seasoned tourism executive, has summarized his goals for the year this way, “The SKÅL USA 2020 Executive Committee will begin its year with a comprehensive

development of 'a 2020 Work Plan' while all the members of the Skål USA executive committee will be in one room,” said Ryan. “Our goal will be to recognize and expand those successful initiatives implemented during the past three years along with the development of new initiatives and programs especially developed to increase membership within the United States and territories. Our main priority will be to continue the momentum of growth in membership by working directly with local clubs and starting new clubs in key markets throughout the USA.”

Since communication is a key to retaining membership, we will benefit from digital technology developed under the new “Digital Transformation Project”. This will improve our level of communication with our membership and potential members. Being the largest national committee in Skål International and being able to demonstrate the positive changes Skål USA has made, we will continue to work on initiatives that will enhance the value of Skål Membership to existing and potential new members.

Skål International USA is currently the largest National Committee in Skål International with 2,000 members and 47 clubs nationwide. You can learn more about the incoming 2020 officers [here](#).

Burcin Turkan, Director Elect, Skål International Executive Committee, and David Ryan, Skål U.S.A. President Elect 2020.



Lisa Conway, Skål USA President.



“
2019 was active and successful year for Skål USA and our 48 member clubs
”

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

ASIA AREA MEETING

Board of Directors 1st Mid-Term Review Meeting

Phuket November 22nd 2019

Skål International Asia Area Board Members with Honorary President Skål International Uzi Yalon and Skål International President Lavonne Wittmann - Phuket November 22nd 2019.

Asia Area Board of Directors 1st Mid-term review was held at Phuket on November 22nd 2019. President Lavonne Wittmann was present during the Mid-term review meeting followed by which there was an informal Asia Cuisine lunch gathering at Roberts restaurant.

Skål Phuket will be the hosts for the 2020 Asian Area Congress to be held at Angsana in June 2020. Part of this includes hosting the 2019 Asian Area Board at Angsana Laguna Phuket. The SIAA Board members conducted a property tour at Angsana Laguna Resort Phuket.



Skål Asia President Sanjay Datta welcomed all the Board Members who were present for the First Midterm SIAA Meeting being conducted by the Members of the present Board. He especially welcomed Skål International President Lavonne Wittmann as well as Honorary President Uzi Yalon who had made the effort to attend the meeting along with the SIAA Board Members.

Skål Asia President Sanjay Datta requested Skål International President to address the gathering and Skål International President Lavonne Wittmann spoke extensively on the state of Skål International, emphasised on the Global Skål community as brand ambassadors must build the brand philosophy of "Creating experience for the International Traveller everywhere".

Detailed plan for Skål Asia Congress 2020 was discussed.

The board recommended a Relook at the Rewards & Awards on Best Practices/ Innovation/Events/CSR /Young Skål, etc. In the emerging business world, innovations, CSR and Young Skål assume a significant role.

VP EA Fabien Clerc announced that he was being transferred to Brazil from 1st April 2020 due to his being a part of the Diplomatic field. As regards Young Skål he felt the requirement to have good Directors for maintaining their numbers and increasing them where possible. He thanked the President and Board Members of SIAA for their support and also requested the President to consider an alternative for the post that he is holding thereafter. The Board placed on record their appreciation for the contribution and commitment displayed by Fabien Clerc during his association with Asia Skål and SIAA Board.

Director PR & Communication P K Mohankumar informed the forum about efforts made towards having a proper media policy for SIAA region and controlling the quality of the matter being offered for Skål International Newsletter, as well as on other Social Media Platforms. He also suggested that we should have badges which defines the persons profession so that the association and discussion can be more meaningful when Skålleagues meet up. Skål International President also found this suggestion to be interesting to be taken forward.

Director of Membership Development Skålleague Dushy briefed the forum on the steps being taken towards the formation of new clubs and the requirement of a policy for new Club formation.

Director of Young Skål Shalini Charles briefed the forum about the suggestions and guidelines offered to Clubs for the formation of the Young Skål Clubs or getting new members and retaining the old once Thailand National President Wolfgang Grimm offered detailed information on the Asia Congress 2020. He presented an itinerary for consideration.

President Sanjay Datta offered his presentation which was about working as a Team and sharing responsibility to deliver and take things forward for SIAA. He was very happy with the performance of all the Board Members and thanked them all for their cooperation and coordination regarding all SIAA matters. President Sk. Sanjay Datta thanked SI President Lavonne and Honorary President Skål International Sk. Uzi all the Board Members for attending the SIAA Midterm Board Meeting.

SKÅL NEPAL CAR RALLY

Skål International, with its headquarter in Torremolinos, Spain is the International organization of Global Tourism Professionals from promoting global tourism and networking. It is the only International association uniting all branches of the travel and tourism industry, with over 15000 members globally, functioning through 400 clubs at local levels, governed and administered to 'Do Business Among Friends'.

Skål International Nepal has 66 independent members from diverse tourism background, including National Tourism Organization (Nepal Tourism Board), Hotel, Travel / Trekking companies, Airlines and Adventure companies. Apart from regular members interactions, Skål Nepal is **actively involved in social activities, heritage conservation and environmental sustainability.**

Nepal is proudly featured as 'Destination of the year 2020' in Skål International, reaching to the wider tourism counterparts scattered across the globe. In its official website, Nepal is marked as most sought-after destination and highlights the best travel experience we offer to our global visitors.

To promote the spirit of tourism festivity, Skål Nepal and Nepal Tourism Board jointly organized a Car Rally from 6 to 8 December 2019. The Rally covered three most loved destination Kathmandu-Chitwan -Pokhara also known as Golden Triangles domestic tourism. En-route, Skål Nepal members also met the local tourism entrepreneurs for inclusive interaction and experienced sharing.

Skål Nepal distributed jackets to the children in Chitwan and also donated five good quality dual steel dustbins in one of the most popular temple (Taal Barahi Temple) in Pokhara.

The main sponsors of the Rally were: MAW Enterprises, Etihad Airways and Nepal Tourism Board.

Road travel in Nepal is the most cherished journey as it directly touches the lives of our residents and directly impacts the socio-economic of our citizens. It's the best way to experience country's social diversity, to touch the hills terrains up and lowlands, while moving through endless stretches of greenery and flowing rivers.

There were 30 Skål Members participating in the car rally, travelling in their own vehicle to celebrate Tourism.

"
Nepal is
proudly
featured as
'Destination
of the
year 2020'
in Skål
International."
"



SAVE
THE
DATES

Skål International Congresses 2020

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL LATIN AMERICAN CONGRESS

17-21 APRIL'20

Guayaquil, Ecuador

[Programme](#)

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL ASIA AREA CONGRESS

25-25 JUNE'20

Phuket, Thailand

[Full Information](#)

NORTH AMERICAN SKÅL INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

30 APRIL'20 - 2 MAY'20

Winnipeg, Canada

[Full Information](#)

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL WORLD CONGRESS

15-20 OCTOBER'20

Rijeka – Opatija, Kvarner
Region, Croatia

[Full Information](#)

For more information on national congresses
and local events, please visit skal.org.

Trade Fairs 2020

Skål International will have a stand at the following major international trade shows, but there are many other trade fairs where Clubs and National Committees have a presence.

MATKA

15-19 JANUARY'20

Helsinki, Finland
Skål stand: 1b29

[Full Information](#)

FITUR

23-27 JANUARY'20

Madrid, Spain
Skål stand: Hall 10, 10A68

[Full Information](#)

ITB BERLIN

4-8 MARCH'20

Berlin, Germany
Skål stand: Hall18, 313-314

[Full Information](#)

WTM AFRICA

6-8 APRIL'20

Cape Town, South Africa

[Full Information](#)

IMEX FRANKFURT

12-14 MAY'20

Frankfurt, Germany

[Full Information](#)

IMEX AMERICA

15-17 SEPTEMBER'20

Las Vegas, U.S.A.

[Full Information](#)

TTG

14-16 OCTOBER'20

Rimini, Italy

[Full Information](#)

WTM LONDON

2-4 NOVEMBER'20

London, U.K.

[Full Information](#)

IBTM WORLD

1-3 DECEMBER'20

Barcelona, Spain

[Full Information](#)



BUSINESS BOOMS IN BARCELONA AT IBTM WORLD 2019

20 DECEMBER 2019

ibtm[®] WORLD
BARCELONA, SPAIN

IBTM World 2019 closed today (21 November 2019) with over 74,000 pre-scheduled business meetings having taken place and a 3% increase in the number of visitors attending the three-day event compared with 2018.

62% of Hosted Buyers participated in IBTM World for the first time this year and 51% of them were completely new to the entire IBTM portfolio. Over 2,600 exhibitors from 150 countries attended, including over double the number of first-time exhibitors compared to 2018, and a 450% increase in net space for exhibitors from China.

Commenting on her experience at IBTM World 2019, Sabina Linke, Executive Director Acquisition & Marketing, NürnbergConvention, said: "For us, IBTM World is always the highlight in our annual trade show calendar; it is the perfect end to our busy year. The potential for doing business on the show floor is very strong and we have had very good appointments and talks with great quality leads as a result. Somehow the unique, open-minded and relaxed spirit in Barcelona is different to that at other trade shows. Maybe it is the destination, maybe it is the team, maybe it is both.



DISCOVER THE COSTA DEL SOL
VISITCOSTADELSOL.COM

Whatever it is, we leave IBTM World 2019 happy in terms of potential business but also on a personal level. We are looking forward to 2020.”

Max Simpkins, MICE Sales Manager, Shangri-La Hotel at the Shard London, commented: “We’ve had a fantastic show and have picked up £600,000 worth of enquiries as a result of attending IBTM World, as well as some really strong leads. The buyers have all been high quality senior decision makers who are motivated to buy. There’s been a very international vibe this year, with lots of buyers from Asia Pacific and America, and we’ve also met with numerous incentive buyers. Out of all the trade shows that I attend globally, we’ve picked up more strong enquiries here than at any other.”

Birte Buchwald, Managing Director, B Italian commented: “Absolutely this show has been successful; this is the place where we meet our most important clients. It is a very professional and well organised show, and this is one of the main reasons we come here. 20% of my meetings have been with new clients and already on the show floor we have signed a contract for an event with 150 people.”

Ines Antti-Poika, Manager, Business Events Finland Convention Bureau, Visit Finland, commented: “Finland Convention Bureau is really happy with another successful IBTM World. Our stand partners have had fruitful meetings and there has been a full house in each of our destination presentations on all three days. It is wonderful to notice the interest among clients towards Finland – our message is getting across and we are getting more and more attention as a destination for international meetings and events.”

Over 2,700 Hosted Buyers were present representing 77 countries, with delegates from globally renowned businesses including: Google, Adobe, ICBC Bank, La Caja Seguras, BBVA France, Dell, Whirlpool and BMW. The number of Association buyers was up up 9% on 2018, with Corporate buyer numbers up 3% on 2018. The newly introduced Elite Corporate Programme was very well received and acted as a valuable opportunity for senior event planners, including from Hewlett Packard, Salesforce, Adobe, MetLife Insurance and lululemon, to share ideas and connect with peers.

Hosted Buyer, Fong Ling Loh, Manager, Incentive Travel Unit, AIA Malaysia, commented: “This is my first time attending IBTM World. I have really enjoyed it; it has been very informative and supportive, and I am looking forward to returning next year. As a result of attending this show, I have arranged to make exploratory visits to Sweden, Thailand, Amsterdam, and Korea next year. All the destinations have been promoted very well, and I enjoyed learning about places such as Jordan, Georgia, Estonia, Munich, Croatia and Japan, which I am also interested in exploring.”

This year’s event saw the introduction of a new zone, IBTM Accelerate. Designed to attract and nurture entrepreneurial talent, the zone incorporated exhibitors and education sessions that gave delegates the opportunity to learn from other successful MICE entrepreneurs and share ideas with their peers.

IBTM Accelerate also hosted the culmination of IBTM’s new event incubator, Event Business Accelerator (EBA), designed to nurture and inspire

entrepreneurial talent. EBA’s nine finalists participated in two days of live pitching in the zone, with the aim of securing on-going mentoring and winning the grand prize. Nanna Ulsøe and Jane Houllind Ulsøe, founders of Canvas Planner – an online task and collaboration tool – were crowned overall winner of the scheme, taking home a cheque for €5,000.

IBTM’s inaugural Global Policy & Practice Forum (GPPF) took place on the eve of IBTM World. Developed with the support of Barcelona Turisme Bureau, JMIC and PCMA, the Forum brought together a group of 30 of the industry’s leading destinations, meeting planners and associations to discuss how business events can both influence and impact wider policy, particularly in the field of healthcare, and drive economic development and social change. The discussions that took place during the forum will be used to deliver a research paper that can be shared across the entire industry.

The GPPF was followed on Monday evening by the event’s annual Meetings Leadership Summit where Isabel Bardinet, CEO, European Society of Cardiology was presented with IBTM’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

Commenting at the close of IBTM World 2019, David Thompson, Exhibition Director, IBTM World, said: “We’re absolutely delighted with the feedback we received during this year’s event, especially when it comes to the quality of meetings and the business opportunities generated.

“This year we delivered a total of nine new features at the event – including the Elite Corporate Programme, our IBTM Accelerate Zone and IBTM’s inaugural

Global Planning and Policy Forum – all of which were very well received. One of my personal highlights was seeing and feeling the buzz at our new Accelerate zone. Most of the education sessions in the zone were standing room only and it was a truly inspiring experience to spend time with and learn from the finalists in our mentoring programme, EBA. Our team was worked incredibly hard to create another hugely successful event and we’re extremely happy with the results.”

During the event, IBTM announced that it has signed a new three-year contract with Barcelona Convention Bureau and Fira de Barcelona that will see IBTM World take place in the city up to and including the 2022 edition. The new contract builds on the existing 15-year relationship between the three organisations, with the next edition confirmed at Fira Gran Via for 1st – 3rd December 2020.

For more information, [visit ibtmworld.com](http://visitibtmworld.com).

MATKA NORDIC TRAVEL FAIR



17–19 Jan 2020 Messukeskus Helsinki

Where sustainable
travel meets the
world

34th consecutive Matka Nordic Travel Fair will be held 15 to 19 January 2020 in Helsinki, Finland and as per usual, the fair brings together travel industry professionals from Finland and abroad. Matka Nordic Travel Fair has almost 1,000 exhibitors and is the biggest travel trade event in Northern Europe. Worth looking into!

The four days in January offer valuable networking and deep insights especially to Nordic consumers and destinations. While Matka Nordic Travel Fair is the top place for Nordic travel industry, the whole world comes together for the fair. With **64,000 visitors**, the **20,000 travel trade professionals** will fill the venue sharing their experiences and knowledge – and of course making some of the most important sales of the year.

In 2020 Matka Nordic Travel Fair's partner country is Estonia, and the fair focuses a lot on sustainable travel.

One day, a year's worth of sales at Matka Workshop Day

Before Matka Nordic Travel Fair is open for public, Wednesday 15 January starts with the official Matka Workshop Day to connect exhibitors and buyers in the most significant travel industry's sales event in Finland and Nordic countries. Workshop Day consists of Meet Finland, which in 2019 had 146 suppliers from Finland and 43 suppliers from all over the world. In 2019 the event had 290 buyers.

"Matka Workshop Day is an excellent event to find new partners from around the world and increase sales. It's not unheard of that exhibitors sell all of next year in one day based on the meetings on Workshop Day", tells Anna Suominen from Matka Nordic Travel Fair.

Sustainability at its core

Responsible and sustainable travel has been the topic of the year in travel industry. **Travel industry needs to find new ways to take sustainability and responsibility into account**, and Matka Nordic Travel Fair focuses a lot on sustainability in 2020. The theme of slow travel and traveling on the ground will have its own theme area and stage. The fair has launched a specific competition for all exhibitors to take part and sign up their sustainable travel product and service. A jury will select the best products, and those will be presented at the fair on 17 January and the winner will walk away with 3000 Euro prize!

REGISTER AS A TRADE VISITOR TO MATKA 2020

Follow this [link](#) and insert the code **MATKASKAL20** to register!

matkatravelfair.com

MESSUKESKUS



THE LARGEST GLOBAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY EVENT IN NORTHERN EUROPE

16-19 JAN 2020

Messukeskus Helsinki
Expo and Convention Center,
Finland

15 Jan 2020 Matka Workshop Day

Almost 1000 exhibitors from over 80 countries | B2B and B2C target groups from several different markets | Buyers from Nordic, Baltic and Asia markets | 17.000 professional travel trade visitors | 65.000 all visitors | nordictravelfair.fi

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ITB BERLIN CONVENTION 2020

Smart tourism
for a better
future



ITB
BERLIN | The Leading
Travel Industry
Think Tank
CONVENTION

4 – 7 March 2020

Groundbreaking changes lie in store for the global tourism industry. The big themes are sustainability, digitalisation, shifting customer demands and luxury travel. These will be the focus of discussions, lectures and deep dive sessions at the ITB Berlin Convention, where experts, researchers and leading representatives of the industry will present their ideas and offer inspiration to visitors for new approaches, projects and products. They will be substantiated by the latest market analyses, examples of best practices and exclusive surveys by the global tourism industry. For trade visitors, the media and exhibitors at the World's Leading Travel Trade Show, admission to the ITB Berlin Convention (4 to 7 March 2020) is included in a ticket to ITB.

Sustainability, climate change and environmental protection are aspects of major concern to the tourism industry, and not just since the Fridays for Future

movement began. The topics of rising CO2 levels and over-consumption of resources and their effects on eco-systems and nature dominate everyday life worldwide. Many tourism companies are focusing more and more on intelligent and sustainable systems for managing tourism flows and including them in their strategies and products. The ITB Berlin Convention has comprehensive information on the current situation, the progress being made, but also on deficits and mistakes.

In addition to ecology and sustainability, **digitalisation has become one of the factors that will dominate tomorrow's tourism industry.** Customers want information about their trip everywhere and at all times. Comprehensive digitalisation can make their wishes come true. This topic runs through the entire convention – on every day of the event participants will discuss a variety of issues and present new ideas.



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CONVENTION

ONE INDUSTRY, ONE CONVENTION AND ALWAYS ONE STEP AHEAD.

4 – 7 March 2020 · itb-convention.com

ITB Convention Programm
now available online



New
Location:
City Cube
Berlin

The events at the eTravel World will provide a practical context with even more background information on **technical innovations and the digital transformation in the industry**. More than 50 presentations, panel discussions and workshops featuring practitioners and visionaries from the technology sector will take place in Halls 7.1b (eTravel Lab) and 6.1 (eTravel Stage).


It is not only digitalisation that is responsible for major change in the travel sector– shifting customer demands and expectations are leading to a complete restructuring of the industry. Travellers want products that fulfil their desires in every way. Rolf Freitag, CEO of IPK International, will present the relevant findings of the ITB Travel Monitor, the most wide-ranging travel survey worldwide, to visitors at the ITB Future Day on 4 March (3 - 3.45 p.m., CityCube, Halls A4 + A5).

Shifting customer demands, desires and expectations are also influencing booking behaviour in the luxury travel market. At the ITB New Luxury Travel Forum on Marketing & Distribution Day on 5 March a new exclusive survey by ITB Berlin and Travelzoo will provide visitors with new data on travellers' attitudes towards sustainability in the global luxury travel market. This will also be the main topic for discussion at the ITB Hospitality Executive Panel.

Additional information is available at itb-convention.com.

Official Partner Country
ITB Berlin 2020



 **Messe Berlin**

WTM AFRICA 2020

World Travel Market Africa just keeps getting bigger and better – and a host of exciting innovations promises to make WTM Africa 2020 even more exciting. The 7th edition on WTM Africa is once again marked by exciting growth, with expanded areas for Travel Forward (formerly the Travel Technology Show), Equal Africa and the introduction of the WTM Africa Travel & Tourism Industry Awards which will shine a global spotlight on African tourism success stories – and so much more.

Launched as a platform to inspire the travel and hospitality industry with the next generation of technology, **Travel Forward focusses on future-proofing travel businesses for the digital age**, helping ensure relevance, improving revenue-generating

opportunities and providing the opportunity to do one-on-one business with innovative tech providers. Travel Forward will take place in a dedicated space on the show floor at WTM Africa at the Cape Town International Convention Centre, giving participants the opportunity to join sessions focusing on topics pertinent to technology and its influence on the industry, get involved in the interactive exhibition and get their hands on the industry's latest tech.

The inaugural WTM Africa Travel & Tourism Awards seek to reward individuals as well as small and large organisations, for powerful and compelling work in promoting tourism across Africa. Themed "Under African Skies", WTM Africa seeks to celebrate the success of national, regional



Innovation is
the Name of
the Game at
#WTMA20

and city tourist boards and recognise outstanding private sector companies and individuals. Entries for all 12 categories – from Most Compelling National Tourism Board Story to Most Compelling Foodie Story – are currently open, for campaigns executed in the period 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2019, eligible for the 2020 WTM Africa Travel & Tourism Awards. For more details on each category, follow this [link](#).

This year, we are thrilled to introduce EQUAL Africa to our show floor. **EQUAL Africa stands for EQUAL Love, Rights, Experiences & Opportunities.** This new Pink Travel event will be a bolt-on full day conference on 06 April 2020. Attendees can also look forward to other trending topics and content shares by over 150 speakers from around the globe in six different theatres on the show floor. Our WTM Africa Festivals will once again return allowing visitors from around the globe to experience the cultures, cuisine and customs of some of our 780+ exhibitors.

Megan Oberholzer, Portfolio Director: Travel, Tourism & Sports Portfolio for Reed Exhibitions South Africa says that WTM Africa continues to track the latest trends and topics which affect the international travel & tourism industry. “WTM Africa also has a history of being a breeding ground for ideas which have a tremendous positive impact on the international industry – and we’ll continue to find ways to provide the best possible platforms for the debates and experiences that drive the future of the industry,” she says.

For more information – including how to register for WTM Africa 2020, visit [africa.wtm.com](#). #WTMA20 runs from 6-8 April 2020 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre.

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WTM Africa is Africa's leading and only B2B exhibition for both inbound and outbound travel and tourism markets, presenting a diverse range of destinations and industry sectors to South African, African and International travel professionals. Through its industry networks, global reach and regional focus, WTM Africa creates personal and business opportunities providing our customers with quality contracts, content and communities.

2019 STATISTICS

- +15%** increase on all visitors attended
- 6,263** unique industry professional
- US\$ 451 000 000** BUSINESS WRITTEN
- 42%** increase on overall countries represented
- 10%** increase on Hosted Buyers year on year
- 738** exhibiting companies

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Book Now! Join Travel Professionals in April 2020



FITUR 2020



Excellent forecasts and plenty of news for FITUR on its 40th Anniversary

From January 22 to 26, 2020, Madrid will once again become the center of international attention thanks to FITUR, the major global gathering for travel professionals organized by IFEMA, which will present one of the most complete and dynamic events to coincide with its 40th Anniversary.

Sustainability, technology and specialization will continue to be the main themes of FITUR 2020, coupled with more international representatives at the show, in line with the positive data in the travel industry. Everything seems to indicate that FITUR will continue its successful and rising history as shown by the figures last year, when 10,400 companies gathered and over 253,000 people attended.

News

The **boost of the B2B events** is one of the key goals of this year's FITUR, both in terms of the general program, FITUR B2B Match, and specialist travel, incentives, meetings and business travel events, FITUR MICE, which on January 22 and 23 will bring together 100 travel professionals with 120 qualified buyers from around the world.

The new personal space, FITUR TALENT, which will emphasize people, their talent, skills and professional training as a competitive edge for travel companies. FITUR TALENT will have an exhibition space, and will assess, by means of day events, workshops and meetings, with very innovative and flexible options, the perspective and strategy of travel companies, talent management and

recruitment companies and training centers, all of them global leaders in this sector.

South Korea, partner country of FITUR 2020

South Korea will be this year's FITUR Partner Country, as it is a destination which has experienced a climb in the number of foreign visitors, welcoming 15.3 million tourists in 2018, 15.1% more than the previous year. This Asian country also has a growing appeal for Spaniards, since last year 27,314 travelled there, 17.2% more than in 2017.

FITUR NEXT

On the other hand, the FITUR NEXT Observatory, the FITUR platform intended to **detect good travel practices with positive and reproducible effects**, focusing its research on how travel can contribute to local economic development. This is one of the challenges which the Observatory, after assessing hundreds of good practices from around the world, has identified as the key for travel to boost its positive effect.

In addition, FITUR will continue to delve into specialization and the growth of some of the sections introduced recently, such as FITUR FILM and FITUR FESTIVALS, and will have personalized and consolidated spaces, such as FITUR GAY (LGBT +) and FITUR HEALTH, as well as the FITURTECHY and FITUR KNOW HOW, where technology is displayed as an essential tool for growth in this sector and progress towards smart tourism.



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