WL NEWS ISSUE 22

WELCOME TO A REVISITED VERSION OF *WL NEWS*!





Are you a WLO Premium member? Submit your news here!

Dear members, dear colleagues,

After an evaluation carried out in the last quarter of 2019, we are happy to present you a revisited version of our monthly newsletter *WL News*. From now on, we will be regularly sharing with you updates on innovative leisure research, latest developments in the leisure industry, and reflections about leisure policy. These demands from our readers translate, starting with this issue, into specific sections devoted, respectively, to Research, Industry and Policy. Some further improvements include merging some of the previously existing sections, and some format adjustments to increase readability. We sincerely hope you like this new version of *WL News*!

As for this year, we aspire to further consolidate our strategic lines and programs, while making our humble contribution, as an organization and from the leisure perspective, to some of the main challenges the world is facing right now. With the bushfire crisis in Australia bringing our attention again to what can no longer be ignored – warm hug to our friends and colleagues there, we encourage the leisure community to actively engage (further) in the debates about sustainable development and the fight against climate change. Here we would like to extend one of the conclusions drawn for the tourism sector in the Expert Meeting on Tourism and the SDGs: Case Studies by the UNWTO Affiliate Members – which are described in a note below – to the wider leisure field: before unprecedented, accelerating and complex mix of risks and opportunities due to the global social and environmental challenges, it is crucial to consider the balance between the economic, social and environmental aspects of the sustainability.

We remind you that *WL News* is also a space for WLO Premium members to disseminate their contents. Don't hesitate to use the "Submit your news here" button above, or contact us at media@worldleisure.org for your news to be shared with the WLO community!

Yours truly,

Dr. Cristina Ortega Nuere WLO Chief Operating Officer



Editoria





16th WL Congress 2020, Pinggu-Beijing: Abstracts received from over 20 different countries, have you submitted yours?

Experts from around the world have already submitted their abstracts for the 16th World Leisure Congress 2020, which will take place from the 17th to the 23rd October in Pinggu-Beijing, China. From Australia, to Rwanda or Thailand, experts from more than 20 countries will meet at the largest global leisure congress, to share and discuss about their latest research and work. Contribute to the development of Leisure Studies, and/ or from your practice in the leisure policy or professional fields, by submitting an abstract today. Don't miss this incomparable opportunity to network at an international level and be part of the conversation! READ MORE...



WLO in the Expert Meeting on Tourism and the SDGs: Case Studies by the UNWTO Affiliate Members

WLO Chief Operating Officer (COO), Dr. Cristina Ortega, is an active member of the UNWTO Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Support. WLO COO presented the Field School as a case study of community development through leisure, at the Expert Meeting on Tourism and the SDGs: Case Studies by the UNWTO Affiliate Members, celebrated on the 23rd January in Madrid, Spain. We take this opportunity to remind our members and extended community that the "Survey on how SDGs have been incorporated into tourism practices and business plans", which is another initiative of the mentioned Working Group, will be open for your inputs till March 2020. Within the framework of the activities of the UNWTO Affiliate Members Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Support, an Expert Meeting on Tourism and the SDGs: Case Studies by the UNWTO Affiliate Members was organized on the 23rd January, in the framework of FITUR 2020, the International Tourism Fair celebrated annually in Madrid, Spain.

This event intended to provide a specialized platform to share experience and knowledge on tourism and the SDGs. The case studies presented the work on each SDG by sharing actions and strategies carried out by the Members of the Working Group on SDGs Support. WLO Chief Operating officer (COO), Dr. Cristina Ortega, presented the case study "Field School: community development through leisure", as an experience contributing to SDG 4: Quality Education.

The session aimed to: recognize the importance of incorporating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the tourism practices, Strategies and activities; share and exchange knowledge, views, experiences and case studies by the UNWTO Affiliate Members related to each SDG; identify potential areas of work and projects on each SDG and tourism; and provide recommendations on contributing to the SDGs. The panel included presentations showing examples of successful initiatives and best practices in the context of incorporating the SDGs into the tourism activities, policies, strategies, etc.

Among the conclusions extracted by Roxana Ashtari, Project Specialist at the UNWTO Affiliate Members Department, it was highlighted that today's tourism practices and businesses are faced with unprecedented, accelerating and complex mix of risks and opportunities due to the global social and environmental challenges. 2020 marks the 5th anniversary of the SDGs and, while today progress is being made in many places, action to meet the 2030 sustainable development agenda is not still advancing at the speed or scale required. Tourism is a catalyst to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the tourism stakeholders can play a significant contribution to the well-being of people and the planet and spread peace and harmony. In this sense, transitioning towards more sustainable and resilient tourism sector also requires an integrated approach that recognizes that these challenges - and their solutions - are interrelated. It is crucial to consider the balance between the economic, social and environmental aspects of the sustainability - once we are focusing on one SDG.

A previous initiative by the UNWTO Affiliate Members Working Group on SDGs Support was the design of a "Survey on how SDGs have been incorporated into tourism practices and business plans". We would like to encourage our members to take part in the survey, by filling in the following form, which will be open until mid-March 2020. We will keep you updated with the results of the survey!



WLO is now presenting its new membership categories for you to choose the one best fitting you!

One of the most relevant highlights from the new WLO membership model is the Free membership category as a first open door, with limited but relevant room to see and explore WLO value. The Premium category, on its turn, offers more relevant membership benefits, and shows a higher level of commitment with the leisure community worldwide. Within this new membership model, WLO is looking to build a strong community of organizations and representatives all over the world, engaging and giving the space to collaborate and contribute in current and future projects.



Your city can be the next to benefit from the celebration of the World Leisure Games!

The Chinese city of Laixi, Qingdao, which has hosted two WL Games – the last one from May to October 2019, with over 20 different events –, provides a perfect example of how the World Leisure Games are a means to bring leisure to the forefront of a city's life, raising awareness among its citizens about the joy and increased quality of life that leisure practice may bring. After this successful experience, we are looking for the next host of the WL Games! If you think your city would be a perfect scenario for an event celebrating leisure and sports with citizens' participation, we'd be happy to let you know more about the WL Games, feel free to contact us! READ MORE...

> The World Leisure Journal is now on Twitter. Follow @WorldLeisureJ and stay updated!



Why to become a World Leisure Community of Excellence?

The title of World Leisure Community of Excellence is given to communities that have successfully used leisure in all its forms to reinvent themselves and to improve the economic, social and cultural lives of their citizens. Through this designation, communities can expect to gain global recognition for its innovative use of leisure practices, showcase achievements at the international level, and join an international network of leisure communities interested in sharing their innovative and revitalizing programs and strategies! The WL Communities of Excellence application is a permanently open call. So far, WLO has given this recognition to four communities: Richmond (Canada), Keqiao District (China), Jingde County (China) and the most recent one, Laixi, Qingdao (China). The latter has hosted two WL Games which, as expressed by local institutions and key stakeholders, have had a major impact on bringing leisure and sports to the forefront of citizens' lives. We invite towns, cities and regions around the world, who actively promote leisure to improve their citizens' quality of life, to apply and join the WL Communities of Excellence network!

READ MORE...

Research



Learning to Sail... on Land: Virtual Reality Sailing Simulation for People with Physical Disabilities

Cari E. Autry, Ph.D., LRT/CTRS Stephen C. Anderson, Ph.D. Department of Recreation Sciences East Carolina University Greenville, North Carolina, USA

East Carolina University houses a Simulation Lab in the Department of Recreation Sciences. The purpose of the lab is to use virtual reality sailing simulators (VRSS) as an intervention for people with disabilities to increase their quality of life physically, emotionally, cognitively, and socially and to produce evidence through research in the field of recreational therapy. One of the Simulation Lab's research projects, led by Dr. Cari Autry and Dr. Stephen Anderson, focuses on virtual reality sailing simulation (VRSS) and quality of life for people with physical disabilities, based on the hypothesis that participation in the VRSS program will result in an increase in participants' simulator sailing standard scores – knowledge (cognitive) and skills (physical) – which is the competence level required for sailing on the water, and an increase in their quality of life (QOL) scores. While the research is still ongoing, all six participants with physical disabilities who have completed the research protocol acknowledged that the VRSS Program contributed to their quality of life and impacted their lives in some way within all four domain areas (physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially).

Sailing is pursued for both leisure and competitive sport purposes. Participation in sailing is regarded as having positive outcomes on people's quality of life (Recio et al., 2013). The same outcomes apply to people with disabilities; however, evidence-based research on the therapeutic use of sailing is limited (Autry & Anderson, 2016). Low participation rates of people with disabilities in sailing programs is one reason for this lack of research. Common constraints to sailing include: knowledge and skill of sailing, access to sailboats, swimming skills, financial resources, and the perception that sailing is elitist and dangerous (Recio et al., 2013). These constraints are exaggerated for people with disabilities and, as such, they typically do not choose sailing as a leisure activity or a sport.

Virtual reality sailing simulators (VRSS) have the potential to bridge the gap between sailing on land and sailing on the water for people with disabilities (Recio et al., 2013; Saunders et al., n.d.; Virtual Sailing, n.d.). East Carolina University houses a Simulation Lab in the Department of Recreation Sciences. The purpose of the lab is to use VRSS as an intervention for people with disabilities to increase their quality of life physically, emotionally, cognitively, and socially and to produce evidence through research in the field of recreational therapy. The lab is also a member of a VRSS International Research Consortium comprising of 8 countries and includes 25 members and 7 universities/research institutes.

One of the Simulation Lab's research projects focuses on virtual reality sailing simulation (VRSS) and quality of life for people with physical disabilities. The research hypothesis: participation in the VRSS program will result in an increase in participants' simulator sailing standard scores – knowledge (cognitive) and skills (physical) – which is the competence level required for sailing on the water, and an increase in their quality of life (QOL) scores.

The study is ongoing; although, six participants with physical disabilities have completed the research protocol. Of those six, three have spinal cord injuries (1 quadriplegia, 2 paraplegia), one has cerebral palsy, and two have spina bifida. Five use a wheelchair full time and one uses crutches and a wheelchair. Four are females and two are males, with an age range of 27-50 years.

The virtual reality sailing simulator is an actual boat with a steering mechanism, mainsail sheet and a computer screen. The boat is on a frame, so it is able to tilt (heel) like a sailboat on the water. The screen allows for visual access to steering, sail trim, wind direction and gusts, boat speed, buoys, and geographical setting which includes a famous body of water with landmarks (see photo). For this research study, the VRSS boat and screen are modeled after an accessible sailboat, the Hansa Liberty and it is adapted with a seat and joystick (manual and electronic). The VRSS Program: Learning to Sail on Land consisted of 11 sessions, each 1.5 - 2 hours. An adaptive sailing program was followed, which included sailing knowledge and skills, e.g., steering, sail trimming, reading the wind, points of sail, sailing a race course, tacking and jibing, knot tying, and nautical terms. The sailing instructor is certified with the US Sailing Association. One researcher is licensed and certified as a recreational therapist and both researchers are professors of recreational therapy.

For quantitative data analysis, the World Health Organization Quality of Life- BREF (WHOQOL-BREF) was administered pre and post program. The WHOQOL-BREF is a 26-item questionnaire, including four domains: physical health, psychological, social relationships and environment. A study prerequisite was that the participant could never have sailed before. A post study sailing standards instrument measured sailing knowledge and practical sailing skills. Physical sailing skills were measured by reach and strength tests. Balance was measured pre and post using the Functional Reach Test: Modified Functional Reach and strength was measured pre and post using the degree in movement of the manual joystick. Observations by the two researchers were used for formative evaluation and a check list was used during each session. The participants' scores (WHOQOL-BREF, Sailing Standards, Reach, Strength) and session assessment data will be analyzed using SPSS software.

For qualitative data analysis, post interviews were conducted using an interview guide focusing on the following areas: Leisure, Quality of Life, VRSS Program, and Sailing on the Water. Observations were also made for formative evaluation and notes were kept each session. The qualitative data will be analyzed using NVivo software. Various coding methods will be applied including Attribute Coding, Provisional Coding, In Vivo Coding, and Eclectic Coding.

To date, the results show that all six participants who have completed the VRSS Program: Learning to Sail on Land have passed the sailing standards (knowledge and practical skills). All reported they felt comfortable and would like to progress to an on the water sailing program if it was available. All six acknowledged that the VRSS Program contributed to their quality of life and impacted their lives in some way within all four domain areas (physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially). All six participants avowed that their perceptions about sailing changed after the VRSS Program. They never thought that someone with a physical disability would be able to sail as it relates to having access to an adapted sailboat, having the ability and skills to sail, and enjoying sailing. As an example, one participant reported, "Never did I think this adrenaline junkie would be excited about sailing or BE ABLE to adaptive sail! Thanks to two Drs. who teach recreational therapy at ECU, they have made it possible... never say never".

As a follow-up to this research study, five of the six participants qualify to move on to a Phase II: Sailing on the Water (Adapted Sailing Program) using a Martin 16, a sailboat specifically designed and built to accommodate people with physical disabilities. It is very similar to the VRSS having a joystick, mainsail sheet, etc. and it has an instructor's seat located behind the participant's seat. One of the six participants will not qualify at this time due to a need for electronic adaptions which the VRSS has but is currently not available in the Martin 16. The Phase II research study will follow a 6-session adaptive sailing program. The same dependent variables, as in Phase I, will be tested pre and post program. An additional variable of connectedness to nature (Mayer & Frantz, 2004) will be used to examine how sailing as a nature-based activity could add to quality of life.

Perceptions about and constraints in accessing nature for the participants with physical disabilities will also be explored. Phase II results will be compared with Phase I results.

<u>References</u>

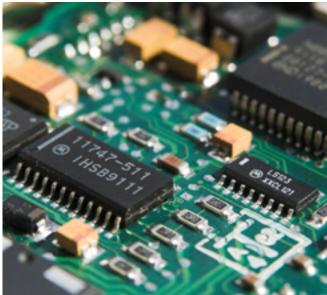
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World Leisure Special Interest Groups (SIGs) work towards the future challenges in the field of leisure research, education, knowledge transfer, and advocacy. Member-generated and memberdriven, SIGs provide a space for WLO members to meet and work together at a global level.

Read more and join the SIGs here!





Talking point: Artificial intelligence

When you hear the words "artificial intelligence", do you think of talking computers and helpful androids? Think again. We find out how AI can be used in fitness. The AI revolution is ramping up across many industries, although not quite in the way futurists predicted. Rather than machines that emulate the human mind, the majority of today's AI technologies consist of sophisticated algorithms that analyse data rapidly to carry out specific tasks. Through machine learning, they can adapt to new situations as they take in more data, making them far more flexible than the more rigid, static programmes of the past. Our experts explain how AI can be used across the fitness industry, why we should embrace it and the benefits it can bring.

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Leisure city policies – what are we (still) talking about?

We inaugurate the newsletter's section on Policy focusing on the city level, as a first level of analysis of where leisure occurs. In search of a contemporary definition of a "leisure city", we look into tools for policy makers to design future leisure related evidence-based strategies. The Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor is presented, a tool developed by the Joint Research Center of the European Commission to allow policy makers to identify local strengths and benchmark their cities against similar urban centers. Currently it comprises quantitative data on 190 cities in 30 European countries, complemented by qualitative data. Back in 2012, the 12th World Leisure Congress in Rimini was organized under the theme "Transforming city, Transforming Leisure". In 2014, the title of the first issue of the World Leisure Journal was The mutual influence of leisure and the city. In the Guest Editorial, André Thibaut and Marc-André Lavigne mentioned that participants in the conference did not agree on how the neologism "leisure city" could or should be defined. Would this be different today, almost eight years later?

In a world that is becoming more and more globalized, urbanized and challenged by new economic, social and technological paradigms, cities are gaining growing importance as the first level where human interaction occurs. Designing leisure-related policies, implementing leisure-related actions and evaluating them to feed into new policies and actions are more and more inter-linked to urban planning and urban management processes.

But what knowledge is available for policy makers to frame evidence-based leisure policies? In this new Policy section introduced in the newsletter, we will start by presenting policy developments, initiatives and tools helpful to policy makers and researchers in relation to leisure and the city.

The first one is the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor developed by the Joint Research Center of the European Commission. A first edition was published in 2017 while a second one, the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor 2019, was unveiled last October by the European Commission, together with a fully revamped data visualisation tool. The instrument is designed to help policy makers identify local strengths and opportunities. Quantitative information is captured in 29 indicators relevant to 9 dimensions reflecting 2 major facets of the cultural, social and economic vitality of the city. Qualitative evidence is used mainly to support quantitative findings. Data is available for 190 cities in 30 countries in the European continent.

The tool is available on a comprehensive website that can be freely accessed by anyone and includes information on the methodology and the indicators chosen. However, the added value of the tool lies in the fact that it allows benchmarking a city against similar urban centers using both qualitative and quantitative data. This is a powerful feature both for policy makers but also for researchers looking into comparing different cities and advancing research in the field of how culture contributes to social and economic well bring.

Comparison here is understood as an instrument of mutual learning between cities and not as a competition. Such tools allow cities to reflect on their cultural assets, reconsider local efforts and provide support for the development of evidence-based policy frameworks. Although data is mainly quantitative, the instrument provides a framework. Even if one aspect of leisure is monitored in this tool – which is culture – the instrument can be used as a reference when trying to understand how research can be useful and practical to (local) policy makers.

We inaugurate this new section in the newsletter focusing on the city level, as a first level of analysis of where leisure occurs. In search of a contemporary definition of a "leisure city", in 2020 we might still struggle to come to a consensus. But the direction is clear. Policies and strategies worldwide point out to making cities attractive to both citizens and visitors, while incorporating leisure strategies for economic, social and cultural development becomes a driving force in this direction.



"As a member of WLO I feel more connected to my international colleagues. I anticipate increasing my understanding of various ways leisure is expressed across the world and ways we might assist those individuals experiencing barriers to their leisure"

John Dattilo, Professor of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management in the College of Health and Human Development at the Pennsylvania State University.





The YPLN travels to Thailand to keep on working on the book on Youth Leisure and Safety

The Young People Leisure Network (YPLN) recently held another Youth Researcher Group meeting, in Thailand, from the 6th to the 15th January, to continue its work on a book on Youth Leisure and Safety. 21 young people and supervisors from Canada, China, Hong Kong, Hungary, Slovakia, Taiwan, Thailand and the United States joined the activity. The host of the program was the Thailand International Folklore Festival, led by the past president of Surin Rajabhat University in Thailand, Prof. Dr. Achara Phanurat and her team. Participants – from whom very positive feedback has been received after they returned home – are now involved in finishing their articles in cooperation with their selected partners. The next step is the writing and evaluating procedure of the book. We will keep you posted about upcoming meetings and developments!

By Dr. Miklos Banhidi, member of the WLO Board of Directors and Chair of the Youth Ambassadors Committee



UNESCO – Celebrating the power of learning on International Day of Education

The second International Day of Education was marked around the world on 24 January in honor of the power of learning. This year in particular, the Day focused on the integrated nature of education and the many ways learning can empower people, preserve the planet, build shared prosperity and foster peace. To overcome these challenges and anticipate the next decades, UNESCO has launched "Futures of Education", a global initiative to reimagine how knowledge and learning can shape the future of humanity. Futures of Education has now opened its online consultation process and is asking people around the world to contribute to the debate. READ MORE...



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FREE ACCESS WL Journal articles on leisure and cities

To deepen in the topic of leisure and cities explored in the new Policy section, we have selected a few articles on the topic published in the *World Leisure Journal*: "Innovative sport and leisure approaches to quality of life in the smart city", by Anne Tjønndal and Maja Nilssen (2019); "Urban governance and public leisure policies: a comparative analysis framework" by Marc-André Lavigne (2014), and "Sister-city Partnerships and Cultural Recreation: the Case of Scarborough, Canada and Sagamihara, Japan" by Sherene Shaw and George Karlis (2011). These articles will be available with free access during February, courtesy of our publisher Taylor and Francis. READ MORE...



UNWTO – Major new study to assess tourism's growing commitment to sustainable development

UNWTO is supporting the tourism sector to become an effective contributor to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 17 SDGs are geared towards reducing poverty and fostering sustainable development worldwide. Through this new study, the organization will analyze how the SDGs are influencing practices and policies among its global network of Affiliate Members, drawn from the private sector, civil society, NGOs and academia, to provide their unique insights into the advances being made right across the sector. READ MORE...

Opportunities



Funded PhD Scholarships at the Department of Tourism, University of Otago Business School

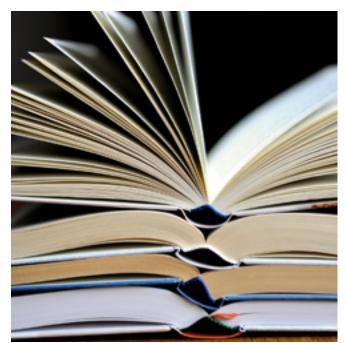
Two funded PhD Scholarships to support research into the social dimensions of invasive species are available at the Department of Tourism, University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand. The PhD scholarships are supported by the Royal Society of New Zealand as part of the Marsden-funded research project "Bad nature: The social dimensions of invasive alien species and their management in New Zealand". Successful applicants will work on a separate aspect of the project based within the Department of Tourism, University of Otago Business School, investigating the social dimensions of non-native invasive species. Deadline for applications is 15th February. Inquiries, expressions of interest, and applications should be directed to:

Professor Brent Lovelock (Ph +64 3 479-8520; brent.lovelock@otago.ac.nz).



Open position – Associate Dean (UHM) for Travel Industry Management and Director of the School of Travel Industry Management, Shidler College of Business, University of Hawaii

The Shidler College of Business at the University of Hawaii at Manoa is pleased to announce an opening for Associate Dean for Travel Industry Management/ Director of the School of Travel Industry Management (TIM). This position serves as a key member of the Dean's management team, responsible for leading and developing the TIM as one of the top travel industry management programs in the world. The first review of applications will begin on Tuesday, February 18, 2020. Any inquiries must be directed to Susan Kikuchi (808-956-4889; tamurapa@hawaii.edu). READ MORE...



Call for CASE STUDIES – Edited book "Interprofessional Collaboration in Parks, Recreation and Human Services: Theory and Cases"

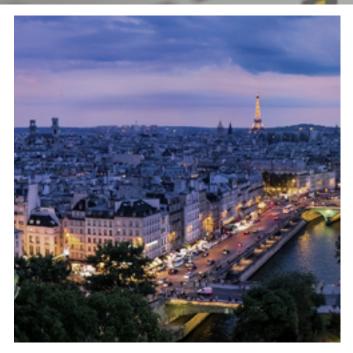
The proposed book provides an in-depth analysis of the opportunities and results of inter-professional collaboration in parks, recreation and human services. Central to this textbook of case studies is promoting greater quality of life and well-being as well as improving the livability of communities. This book of case studies is ideally suited for undergraduate and graduate seminars and training professionals. Proposals are encouraged to reflect a wide range of case studies within these broad themes. Examples might include topics such as mental health, adaptive sports, palliative care, joint-use spaces, community health, alternative health practices, the built environment, etc. Please send proposed case study title, name of author(s), and an abstract (250-400 words) to the editors, Drs. Jody H. Hironaka-Juteau jhironak@csufresno.edu and Samuel V. Lankford slankford@csufresno.edu by February 29, 2020.

Mobility First!

Open call for APPLICATIONS – Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF): MobilityFirst!

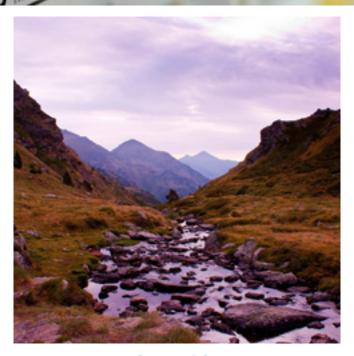
ASEF has launched the 2020 open call for *Mobility First!*, a travel grant of the Foundation for artists and cultural professionals. Artists and/or cultural professionals looking for funding to travel to a festival, workshop, training or research trip in the arts and culture sector, are strongly encouraged to apply! 2020 marks the fourth year of *MobilityFirst!*, and to date, 312 cultural professionals have been supported through this program, facilitating cultural exchange between 48 ASEM countries. International travel support is then granted to selected cultural professionals in Asia and Europe to participate in activities that are integral to their professional development, which would initiate a multiplier effect to others and benefit the society. **READ MORE...**





UNESCO – Global Sports Week Paris (5-7th February 2020, Paris, France)

The first edition of Global Sports Week will be held from 5th to 7th February 2020 at the Carrousel du Louvre in Paris, under the High Patronage of the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, and UNESCO, with support of the Paris City Council, the French Ministry of Sports and other public and private partners. The Global Sports Week is the new annual event in the world of sport bringing together sport international leaders and other influencers to exchange, move and build together the future of sport. The content of the event reflects the place of sport at the intersection of business and society, highlighting its unique potential to drive positive impact in a purpose-driven world. READ MORE...



UNWTO – 11th World Congress on Snow and Mountain tourism (11-13th March 2020, Andorra)

UNWTO and the Ministry of Tourism of Andorra, in collaboration with the Perish of Canillo, will organize the 11th World Congress on Snow and Mountain Tourism. Under the theme "Tourism, Innovation and Sustainability", the event will focus on the role of mountain tourism and rural development mainly addressing the topics of "innovation", "sustainability" and "digital transformation" and will explore innovative IT-solutions for sustainable tourism, linkages between "responsible consumption" and local goods and resources, inclusive tourism and the development of responsible destinations. READ MORE...

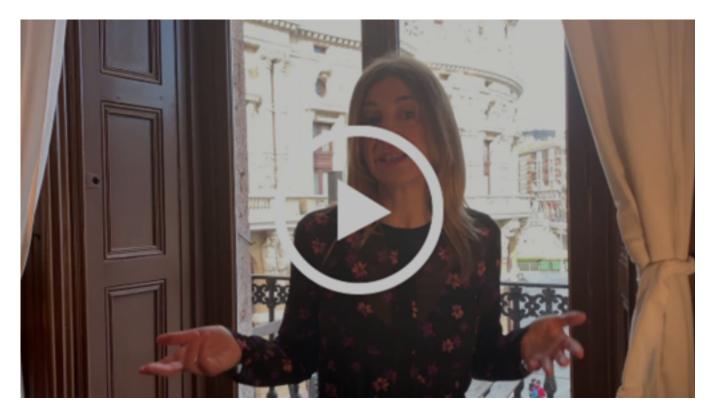
16th WL CONGRESS PINGGU-BEIJING 17th-23rd OCTOBER



Encounter

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WLO in 2020: a message from the Chief Operating Officer





WORLD LEISURE ORGANIZATION (WLO)

World Leisure Organization is a non-profit organization registered in the State of New York in Special Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council since 1990.

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