

# WL NEWS

**ISSUE 59**

## **EXPLORING LEISURE FUTURES**



**November 2024**

# Editorial

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

Dear members, dear colleagues,

November has been a dynamic month for the World Leisure Organization! From Abu Dhabi to the digital realm, we have been actively shaping the global leisure landscape.

This month, our participation in the ICCA Congress highlighted the intersection of culture, sustainability, and innovation in the leisure industry. We are also thrilled to celebrate Mireia Iglesias' well-deserved nomination for the prestigious Eventex Awards, a recognition to her outstanding contributions to events in our field.

There's plenty more to discover in this issue: the launch of our new Critical Event Studies Special Interest Group (SIG), updates from the *World Leisure Journal*, and two engaging recordings – one from our recent webinar on higher education in leisure and recreation, and another exploring effective collaboration with leisure consultants.

Dive into these stories and join us in exploring the ever-evolving world of leisure!

Yours truly

Dr. Cristina Ortega Nuere  
WLO Chief Operating Officer





# WLO News



## 63<sup>RD</sup> ICCA CONGRESS

**TOMORROW  
STARTS  
TODAY**

### WLO Joins ICCA Congress 2024 in Abu Dhabi

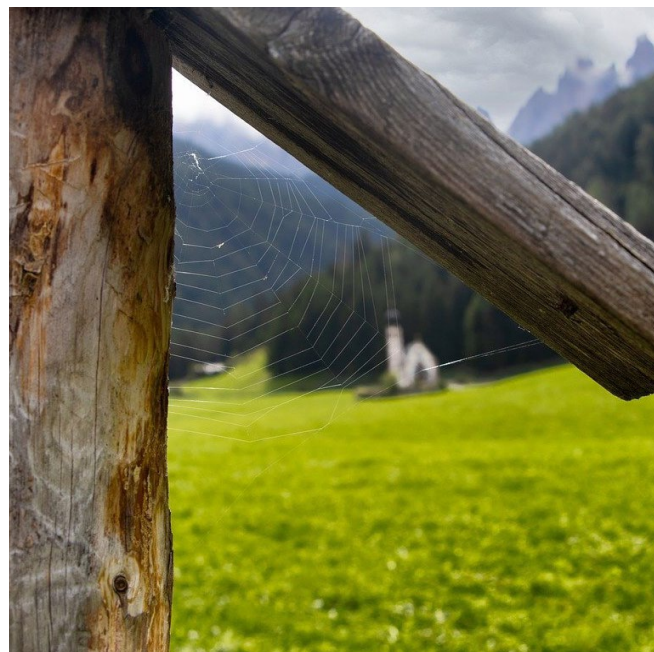
Dr. Mireia Iglesias, WLO Communication and Events Officer, recently attended the 63rd International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) Annual Congress in Abu Dhabi from October 20 to 23, 2024. The congress featured a diverse program with sessions on technology and innovation, sustainability, cultural awareness, and business trends, as well as opportunities to connect with Middle Eastern culture. Through networking with local professionals and participating in culturally enriching activities, attendees gained valuable insights into the region's heritage and its influence on the leisure industry, from design and service practices to sustainability efforts rooted in local traditions.

This immersive experience enabled meaningful exchanges that bridged global perspectives with regional values, fostering a deeper understanding of how Middle Eastern culture shapes the future of tourism and leisure. Additionally, the event served as a valuable networking platform, allowing for connections with both established and new colleagues in the industry. A key highlight was Mireia's meeting with Hani Harati from IAAPA, where they discussed important themes such as innovation, membership engagement, and exploring collaborative opportunities for mutual benefit.



## **WLO Communication and Events Officer nominated for Eventex Awards 2024 as one of the industry's most influential people for the second consecutive year**

We are delighted to announce that Dr. Mireia Iglesias, the WLO Communication and Events Officer, has been nominated for the second consecutive year as one of the most influential people in the events industry by the prestigious Eventex Awards 2024. This repeat nomination recognizes her sustained impact and exceptional contributions to the industry, as well as her commitment to advancing the role of leisure and events on a global scale. The Eventex Awards are internationally respected as a benchmark of excellence, celebrating the most innovative and impactful professionals, companies, and events in the sector. Each year, this honor is awarded to leaders who shape industry trends, drive innovation, and make a significant impact on audiences and communities worldwide.



## **WLO joins an online event on Sustainability in the Event Industry**

WLO Secretariat team followed, followed on behalf of WLO the session "Developing a Low Carbon & Sustainable Pathway for the Event Industry: A Journey Towards Net Zero". This vital conversation took place under the umbrella of the prestigious [COP29](#) summit, a global platform committed to addressing climate change and fostering sustainable solutions. The session spotlighted innovative strategies and collaborative approaches aimed at transforming the event industry into a catalyst for sustainability. Participation in this event emphasizes WLO's commitment to promoting responsible leisure practices worldwide. Stay tuned for insights and takeaways from this pivotal event as we continue advocating for a greener, more sustainable future for the event industry and beyond.



# Industry



**ukactive** launches the 2024 Digital Maturity Effectiveness report of the fitness, leisure and sports sector.



2021, 295 organisations have completed the consultation. The report tracks trends in the sector's digital adoption and this year's consultation shows an increase in the number of organisations using the latest artificial intelligence (AI) in day-to-day operations (up 3% from 2023), with more saying they plan to use AI in the future.

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<http://leisuremedia.com/signup>

## Digital Futures 2024 report shows growth opportunities as focus turns to data and AI across fitness and leisure market

On 28 November, UK active and Sport England released the Digital Futures 2024 report, marking a successful fourth year of consultation. The report provides a measure of how the UK physical activity sector, including fitness and leisure operators, National Governing Bodies for Sport, Active Partnerships, sports clubs and other providers are embracing digital and the next steps required for growth. This year saw 117 eligible UK fitness, leisure and sport organisations complete the consultation, representing 1,600 sites and around four million members nationwide. Since the Digital Futures programme began in

# Network



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN...?

## CRITICAL EVENT STUDIES

JOIN THE NEW WLO  
SPECIAL INTEREST  
GROUP!



Chaired by:



**Dr. Willem Coetzee**  
Lecturer, Western  
Sydney University



**Dr. Alba Colombo**  
Associate Professor,  
Universitat Oberta  
de Catalunya



**Dr Trudie Walters**  
Senior Lecturer, Te  
Whare Wānaka o  
Aoraki/Lincoln  
University

## Announcing the launch of the WLO Special Interest Group on Critical Event Studies

The World Leisure Organization is proud to announce the launch of the Critical Event Studies Special Interest Group (SIG), a new initiative focused on exploring the transformative role of events in shaping social, cultural, and environmental progress. The new SIG is led by renowned experts in the field: Dr Willem Coetzee, Lecturer at Western Sydney University, Australia; Dr Alba Colombo, Associate Professor at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain, and Dr

Trudie Walters, Senior Lecturer at Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki/Lincoln University in Aotearoa New Zealand. This global network will foster critical discussions, collaborative research, and practical applications in the field of leisure events. Activities include sessions at the 2025 World Leisure Congress, publication opportunities, webinars, and collaborative projects, all aimed at redefining the legacy and impact of events. Learn more and join us in this exciting endeavor.

[READ MORE...](#)

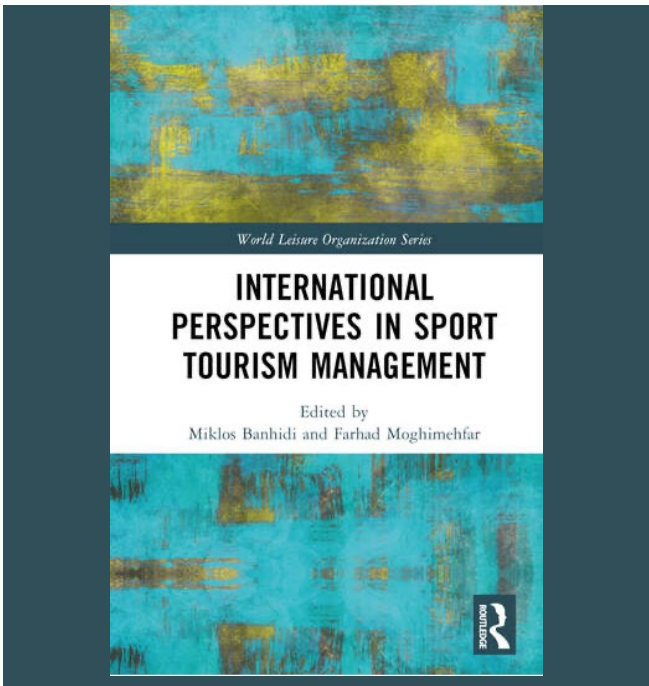
## Webinar recording available! The Future of Higher Education in Leisure and Recreation

The recording of the webinar “Successfully Navigating the Future of Higher Education in Leisure and Recreation: Global Administrative Perspectives” is now available. Held on October 24, 2024, the event brought together global experts to discuss key trends, challenges, and strategies shaping higher education in leisure and recreation. Co-organized by the WLO, as member of the Global Relevance Committee – which brings together TALS, LSA, CILRA, ANZALS, and the WLO – the webinar featured insightful contributions, including those from WLO representatives Dr. Oksana Grybovykh Hafermann, a WLO Board Member, and Leonardo Calix Soares, the 2023 recipient of the WLO Thomas & Ruth Rivers International Scholarship. The discussion offered valuable perspectives for administrators, educators, and policymakers in the field.





# Publications



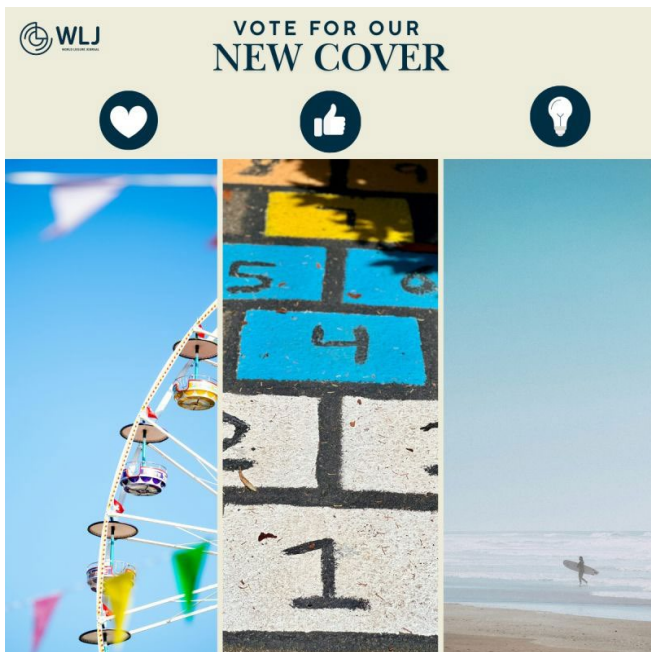
## Have you checked out the first book in the WLO Book Series with Routledge?

We are excited to highlight *International Perspectives in Sport Tourism Management*, the first publication in the WLO Book Series with Routledge. Edited by Miklos Banhidi and Farhad Moghimehfar, this insightful volume examines the global landscape of sport tourism, focusing on its cultural, economic, and social dimensions. Featuring case studies from around the world, including the Global South, the book explores emerging themes such as e-sports, emotional well-being, sustainability, and innovative approaches to management and marketing. It is

an essential resource for students, researchers, and professionals in leisure and tourism studies. As WLO member, enjoy an exclusive 30% discount when you purchase this book.

[READ MORE...](#)





## Help us choose the new *World Leisure Journal* cover!

We're excited to announce that World Leisure Journal (WLJ) is refreshing its cover, and we want you to help shape the new look! WLJ has three stunning cover image options, and we need your help choosing the one that best represents WLJ's vision. Head over to WLJ LinkedIn page to see the options and vote for your favorite!

It's easy to participate:

1. Visit [World Leisure Journal LinkedIn](#) page
2. Check out the three cover options.
3. React to the cover posts: "Love", "Like" or "Insightful"

The image with the most votes will become the new cover of *World Leisure Journal*. Thank you for helping WLJ make this decision together!



## The latest issue of *World Leisure Journal* is out now!

Volume 66, Issue 4, is the latest Special Issue of World Leisure Journal on "*Unstructured entanglements of human leisure and nonhuman animal life*". This Issue explores the complex, intertwined relationships between humans and nonhuman animals within the realm of leisure. As human society increasingly recognizes the sentience and agency of nonhuman species, leisure studies are undergoing an "animal turn"—moving beyond anthropocentric perspectives to view leisure as a multispecies experience. This issue highlights the rich, diverse "entanglements" humans share with animals across a spectrum of settings, from structured interactions like pet ownership and wildlife tourism to spontaneous encounters in parks, cityscapes, and wilderness areas. Featuring eight articles, this issue covers a range of animals—including dogs, birds, and wild animals like bears—and examines how human leisure activities impact, and are influenced by, these creatures. The collection challenges conventional species categories and encourages new ways of understanding animals as individuals with unique needs and behaviors. By rethinking the ethics and scope of leisure studies, this special issue provides a fresh perspective on human-animal interactions and invites researchers to embrace multispecies approaches that respect the agency of all beings involved.

[READ MORE...](#)

## Articles:

Realizing multispecies justice: a (dog) walk in the park?

Miranda-Jane Willis

Pages: 516-537

Addressing leisure interest conflicts surrounding the transgressive human-animal relationships of unhoused people and their pets

Daniel Bisgrove

Pages: 538-558

Barks and bites: dog-friendly dining experiences

Julie Kellershohn & Rishad Habib

Pages: 559-579

Tourists' perceptions towards stray/free-roaming animals (FRA): the case of İzmir, Turkey

Nur Kulakoğlu Dilek & S. Emre Dilek

Pages: 580-599

Duck tales and beyond: power at the duck pond through the giving and taking of food

Paul Tully & Neil Carr

Pages: 600-616

"Few people and the birds". Negotiating tourism development and more-than-human hospitality on the margin

Pórný Barðadóttir & Katrín Anna Lund

Pages: 617-635

Non-human animals in forest bathing: an atmospheric perspective

Yiqin Zhang, Hirofumi Ueda & Mengde Wang

Pages: 636-659

Theriophobia: "problem bears," leisure, and living in bear country

Justin Harmon

Pages: 660-668



## World Leisure Journal articles with free access in December

This November, World Leisure Journal celebrated two important global observances with free access to curated articles that explore themes of inclusivity, tolerance, and sustainability in leisure practices. On November 16th, International Day of Tolerance, recognizing the importance of diversity, empathy, and respect in our increasingly interconnected world. In line with this, we're sharing articles that delve into how leisure spaces can foster cultural understanding, inclusivity, and harmony among diverse communities.

[Context for Peace and Community Tourism: A Worldview Framework](#)

[Samuel V. Lankford, Oksana Grybovyh & Jill K. Lankford](#)

[World Leisure Journal, Volume 50, 2008 - Issue 3](#)

Then, on November 26th, World Sustainable Transport Day, focusing on the role of eco-friendly travel and transportation in leisure and recreation. The article featured for this day examine how sustainable transport options impact leisure experiences, support environmental health, and contribute to more sustainable tourism practices.

[The making of the Tour de France cycling race as a tourist attraction](#)

[Alix Varnajot](#)

[World Leisure Journal, Volume 62, 2020 - Issue 3](#)

Enjoy this month's selection of free access articles and join us in reflecting on how leisure can support a more tolerant and sustainable world.



# Opportunities



## Special Issue

Effects of Exercise and Diet on Health

### Guest Editor

Prof. Dr. Márta Wilhelm

### Deadline

25 July 2025



*nutrients*

IMPACT  
FACTOR  
4.8

Indexed in:  
PubMed

CITESCORE  
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## Call for Papers on “Effects of Exercise and Diet on Health” for Special Issue in *Nutrients* (Deadline: 25 July 2025)

Researchers and professionals in the fields of health, nutrition, and physical activity are invited to submit their work to the Special Issue Effects of Exercise and Diet on Health, published in the renowned open access journal *Nutrients*. This issue is guest edited by Prof. Dr. Márta Wilhelm, Chair of the Leisure and Innovation WLO Special Interest Group. This Special Issue seeks to explore the synergy between physical activity and nutrition in promoting healthier lifestyles. Contributions that focus on interventions, strategies, and innovative programs encouraging active and balanced living are especially welcome.

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## Call for Papers: 23rd ACEI 2025 Conference (Deadline: February 1, 2025)

The 23rd bi-annual conference of the Association of Cultural Economics International (ACEI) will take place at Erasmus University Rotterdam from June 24-27, 2025. The call for papers is now open, with a variety of sessions planned, including a special panel on tourism. The ACEI Conference attracts a global community of scholars and practitioners to explore the economic facets of arts and culture. This event is renowned for its inclusivity and diversity, offering a platform for a wide range of speakers and methodologies. It encourages interdisciplinary contributions that enhance our understanding of the economic, business, social, and policy dimensions of arts and culture. Original research contributions are invited across a broad spectrum of cultural economics.

[READ MORE...](#)

# Encounter



## Re-watch the latest Leisure Management SIG webinar on “Working with leisure consultants: Enhancing effective collaboration”

This webinar, held on 25-26 November, explored how professional leisure consultants work with government and non-profit organisations. Leisure consultants are often contracted for a variety of specific tasks by governments and non-profit organisations to achieve specific outcomes. Little is known about how leisure consultants and contractors can effectively collaborate to gain the best value from their relationship. This webinar will explore strategies to make consultant / contractors relationship more effective. The webinar conversation included Reggie Davidson, Superintendent of Recreation for Wichita Kansas Parks and Recreation, and Wendy Holland, owner and director of CommunityVibe, a leisure consulting business in Victoria Australia.

[Watch it here!](#)







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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