

EXC-016 MOTION FOR SI GA 2015

Subject Working Group: Travel and hosts/ Regional Development

Title of motion
Servas as an organisation committed to ethical and sustainable travel

National secretary and national member group proposing motion
Ann Greenhough on behalf of SI Exco.

Summary of the motion
<p>The GA approves Servas promoting ethical travel, concern for the environment and human rights as part of its philosophy as a global peace organisation. This would be expressed on the SI website through the statement: 'Travel peacefully and walk lightly on the earth'.</p> <p>As Servas members we should be aware of the social and environmental impact of our travels. We should respect and protect the vulnerable communities and fragile environments that we visit as an essential elements of peaceful travel.</p> <p>A special interest network will work in conjunction with the proposed environment network to raise awareness within Servas about issues concerning ethical travel. It will also seek to make links with organisations both local and global involved in sustainable tourism.</p>

Background information and reasons for proposing the motion.
<p>During the SI meeting in Dalesbridge, UK in 2014 there were discussions about responsible travel and its relevance to Servas.</p> <p>Issues were debated about the impact of the way we travel on both the environment and communities we visit. It was felt these issues are of concern to travellers of all ages.</p> <p>It was concluded that as a peace organisation Servas should be explicit about its commitment to ethical travel including protection of the environment and human rights.</p> <p>One definition of ethical travel:</p> <p><i>Ethical travel is simply mindful travel: an awareness of our impact as we explore the world. Travel is now the biggest industry on Earth - even bigger than oil - and the economic clout of travelers is enormous. Which countries should we visit? Where do we spend our money once we get there? How do our interactions with our hosts support international goodwill, and promote cross-cultural understanding? The way we answer these questions has a real influence on the environment, human rights, and the way our home country is viewed abroad. -</i></p> <p>http://www.novinite.com/articles/95742/Ethical+Travel</p>

Likely benefits for Servas International and national groups if the motion is passed.
Acknowledging the importance of travelling responsibly would emphasise a key aspect of our philosophy as a global peace organisation and be visible to those considering joining Servas.

Resource implications if the motion is passed in terms of time, human resources and specialist expertise.

Promoting the idea of ethical travel would be led by a special interest network of those most committed and knowledgeable about the issues behind the concept. It would circulate information within Servas and raise awareness of the issues on both a local and global scale. Links would be explored with organisations active in this field such as Tourism Concern and Ethical Traveler.

What are the budget implications, if any, of the motion for Servas International and for national groups in the short and longer term?

No specific budget implications.

Who should be responsible for the actions arising from the motion in terms of planning, development and management, for example which officer within SI Exco or SI Committee.

A special interest network on ethical travel. Lead person to be confirmed.

Would there be implications for the Servas International statutes if the motion is passed?

No

What is the likely impact if the motion is not passed?

A missed opportunity to provide a new focus for Servas which reflects the changing world of travel and considers the impact that travelling has on the environment and on the communities we visit.