

# MOTION FORM FOR SI GA 2018

## 1. Heading for motion (No more than 10 words)

**Ger-001: Making ServasOnline a Priority**

## 2. Member Group(s) proposing motion (note that only SI Exco and Member Groups may propose motions)

Germany

## 3. Exact wording of the motion to be voted on

We move that the completion of the transition to ServasOnline be made the number 1 priority for SI for the next 3 years.

This includes:

1. Allocating financial resources for the development of the ServasOnline website (See Servas France motion) and for tools needed for issue discussion, management, tracking, and priority setting
2. Creation of a strong team to facilitate:
  - Continued fixing of bugs and critical functional enhancements needed for the effective use of ServasOnline in the short term.
  - Continued migration of country data to ServasOnline.
  - Identification of issues and priority setting.
  - Developing a governance procedure for decision making about critical issues in the Servas organizational structure that affect the structure of ServasOnline
  - Developing a roadmap for the next version of ServasOnline, based on these decision.

## 4. Background information and reasons for proposing the motion

We recognize that ServasOnline is not the only issue that is important to Servas, and this motion is not saying that Servas should stop all other initiatives and direct all energies to this one. Other initiatives such as peace and youth activities must continue.

However, ServasOnline is a bold move forward for Servas, and one that is critically necessary to manage a worldwide organization and keep us alive in a digital age to meet the core mission of Servas: "Peace and understanding through travel and hosting". Much work has gone into development, but much work is still required to make it function in a way that will meet our needs.

As we work with ServasOnline, it has become apparent that there are many issues that still need to be addressed before it can be used effectively. Some of these are bugs that need to be fixed or simple changes that will make ServasOnline easier to use. However, some administrative functions need to be added and there are some areas that need major changes.

More importantly, we've realized that there are differences in the administrative processes around the world that need to be taken into consideration in making these changes, and it could be that some of these processes or procedures will need to be standardized before a better version can be developed.

It has also become (more) apparent that there are underlying philosophical differences of how Servas should function that need to be resolved. These include issues such as:

- Membership by household or individual membership?
- Joint LOIs or individual LOIs?  
Expiry date of LOI—1 year from request date or 1 year from travel start date?
- Who should be able to see member profiles?  
Should we continue to use stamps or switch to a simple membership system?
- Whose definitions do we use for the hosting profiles? (may sound minor, but if we're not consistent, the searches won't work)  
Dealing with new applicants—how to make the initial contact ?

The scope of this task must not be under-estimated. The needs and processes of over 50 different countries need to be taken into consideration to develop a system that works for everybody. An understanding of these differences, collaboration and compromise are needed. We need to develop a process for making these decisions, establishing priorities, and communicating with the developers.

Those countries who have moved to ServasOnline, particularly those who made the transition early, have put enormous amounts of work into the effort, with limited instructions, often with trial and error processes for dealing with an unfinished application with numerous bugs that didn't always match our organizational structures. The project manager put in unsustainable amounts of time, trying to help with migration, liaise with developer, respond to inquiries, and fix repeated application problems (such as disappearing "permissions"). We have been unable to come up with an effective structure for decision making and priority setting on changes needed for the current system, or decisions about a future one. We have been unable to find a developer who can complete the changes needed effectively and in a timely fashion.

The decision of the Project Manager to resign his role after putting in 7 years of extremely hard work makes this situation even more critical.

In order to move forward in the short term, we need:

1. An application manager/managers with realistic workloads to consult with the users and the Host List Coordinator (??? Secretary if this title changes) on migration issues, problems with the current system, critical changes, and priorities and to liaise with the developer. Someone is also needed to manage ongoing issues with ServasOnline such as the assigning of permissions, inquiries, etc. This could mean splitting or sharing roles to make the workload manageable and to prevent the collapse of the project if something happens to the incumbent.
2. Commitment from Servas members to participate in ServasOnline review and development teams.
3. A tool for effective discussion, issue tracking, and prioritization.

In the longer term, but beginning now, we need a collaborative approach for

1. Developing a vision for Servas/ServasOnline in the future
2. Making the decisions about critical philosophical and procedural issues about how Servas should function as an organization
3. Developing a "roadmap" for the next version of ServasOnline.

To do this will require a major investment of time, energy, and financial resources from the Servas Community.

- EXCO will need to make it a priority and be invested in the process.
- Funds need to be allocated
- Every member group will need to commit to open dialogue and collaboration
- Volunteers need to come forward to spread the work.

#### **5. Who is responsible for accomplishing the results of the motion?**

EXCO, The ServasOnline Development Team, All members //

#### **6. Benefits for SI**

ServasOnline is an essential tool for administering a world-wide network, and especially important if we want to gain the new, younger members that we need to secure the future of Servas. It must function as smoothly as the websites of other similar organizations to meet the expectations of members and potential members who function in a digital world. It must also be easy enough to use for older current members, not so accustomed to using the internet and technology.

A smoothly functioning application will mean that the organization will have greater appeal to new members; members will be able to manage their profile, and see the advantages of an online system, administrators will spend less time managing profiles for members or teaching them to use it; administration will be easier; we will have less burnout amongst current workers who are investing inordinate amounts of time and energy to try to move the system forwards.

Because it has made member groups around the world talk to each other and compare systems and processes, the migration to ServasOnline has opened the door for discussion of many philosophical and procedural issues. This has provided an opportunity to examine and work through many of these issues.

The commitment of members and teams across all levels and member groups to make ServasOnline a priority can make this happen.

#### **7. Resource needs - time, human resources and specialist expertis**

Besides the input of members across the Servas Community, the following are needed:

- (Financial resources to hire a development company) see France's motion.
1. An application manager with technical expertise to manage the application, liaise with the user community and with the developer . This is a key, volunteer position. Consideration should be given to reviewing the job description and, if possible splitting the role.
  2. Team members and leaders to participate in discussing issues, evaluating suggestions, making decisions, and prioritizing tasks.

<b>8. Budget implications</b>
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| 1. An issue tracking tool. |
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Costs:
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One recommended tool (Gitlab) has a cost of \$0 to \$19.00 per month per user, depending on the level of support desired. Decisions would also need to be made about how many users to allow.
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| 2. Development resources (see France's motion). |
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<b>9. Does it affect the SI statutes?</b>
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N/A
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<b>10. What is the impact if the motion is not passed?</b>
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Without this commitment, it is highly likely that ServasOnline will fail, and this will have devastating effects on the Servas Organization.
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ServasOnline, as it exists now, does not meet the needs of our members or administrators. Without the commitment of resources for development, a clear vision of where we are going, a process for making decisions and a committed team to allow for collaboration and realistic workloads, it is very likely to fail and/or require more resources in the long run.
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**For Minute Taker Use Only:**

<b>Amendments (Passed or defeated)</b>
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<b>Final Motion (Passed or defeated)</b>
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