IN THIS ISSUE

* OVER 10,000 PROFILES IN SERVASONLINE
* UPDATE OF PROFILES HIGH PRIORITY
* SERVASONLINE COORDINATORS USER GROUP CONTINUES TO GROW
* KEY PEOPLE UPDATE THEIR SERVASONLINE PROFILE
* SERVAS CANADA PILOT: INTRODUCING ELECTRONIC LOI
* A STEP TO REDUCE SICOGA’s ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT
* TIME FOR SI GA 2018 ELECTION NOMINATIONS
* SERVAS IRAN IS GROWING
* MEXICAN KNIT NETS WORKSHOP
* ALBANIA NOW A SERVAS COUNTRY
* PEOPLE: NEW NS’S IN BELARUS AND RUSSIA — ROBERTSON AWARDED

* WHAT SI EXCO HAS DECIDED — FIND OUT HERE
* AD: WEBSITE DEVELOPER FOR SI WEBSITE
* AD: APPLICATION MANAGER FOR SI WEBSITE
* AD: EDITORS WANTED FOR SI WEBSITE
* AD: SERVAS FACEBOOK ADMINISTRATORS WANTED
* NEWSLETTER IN SPANISH, TOO
* OVER 10,000 PROFILES IN SERVASONLINE

On March 27 there were over 10,000 profiles in ServasOnline, which is fast becoming the global Servas International membership administration system. This means that more than half of all individual members of Servas worldwide now have their member data in ServasOnline. In January this year the following Servas countries successfully transferred their members personal data: Britain, Colombia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Cameroon. Then in February Mali and Gambia. In March Taiwan, Singapore and Netherlands transferred the data.

Servas France was the first member country that successfully transferred their members data on July 24 2016. After that the following countries followed:

2016: Lebanon and Jordan October 3, Saudi Arabia October 16, Canada October 26, South Africa November 17, Costa Rica December 23.

2017: Turkey January 23, Guatemala January 30, Brazil February 6, Slovakia February 19, New Zealand March 3, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark April 3, Cuba April 7, Cambodia April 10Gambia April 29, Austria and Czech Republic May 5, Australia May 9, Spain May 17, Chile May 28, Iceland August 4, Finland August 14, Belarus August 16, Japan September 3, Hungary September 11, Belgium and Luxemburg November 24.

2018: Tanzania and Rwanda January 9, Britain January 24, Cameroon February 3, Mali February 18, Gambia February 21, Congo February 27.

Servas members are also available via ServasOnline in the following countries, but the hosting data has been defined as incomplete by the ServasOnline Team: India, Paraguay, Kenya, Uganda, Ireland, Iran, Israel, Greece, Egypt, Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Uzbekistan, Uruguay, Ukraine, Thailand, Switzerland, Russia, Portugal, Panama, Mexico, Malaysia, Latvia, Myanmar, Korea, Indonesia, Georgia and Czech Republic.

Country data is defined as incomplete when - for a majority of the members of a country - none or very few of the hosting sections of the profiles are filled in.

SI Exco and the ServasOnline Team invite all remaining Servas countries to join in, so that all national entities will be listed in ServasOnline for the 2018 Servas International Conference and General Assembly (SICOGA 2018) in October this year in Seoul, Korea.

The ServasOnline Team is available to help the move to ServasOnline and to participating in this major development necessary to maintaining and developing Servas.

Send your questions to the ServasOnline Team. Email to servasonline@servas.org

The ServasOnline Coordinators User Group (SOLNCU) also helps Servas countries make the transition to the Servas International member administration system ServasOnline. Judy Bartel from Servas Canada is the convenor of the group, which all members of transitioning countries are invited to join.

Jonny Sågänger, SI President, Bernard Andrieu, ServasOnline Application Manager, and Pablo Colangelo, SI Host List Manager
**UPDATE OF PROFILES HIGH PRIORITY**

More and more countries are actively working on loading their members data on our new membership administration system ServasOnline (please read the article above). An increasing number of Servas countries are offering training on how to use the system and encouraging their members to update their profiles in ServasOnline.

It’s very important that all members of Servas update these profiles. Each member should be encouraged to go online as soon as possible and complete her/his profile and place her/his home on the Servas map. This personal data can only be seen by Servas members, who have completed the membership process in their own countries.

Travellers can view host profiles to choose the hosts they’d like to meet. They can locate a would-be host on a world map, which can be very convenient for organizing travel with Servas.

National ServasOnline administrators in 57 countries have administrative access (admin access) and participate in the ServasOnline Coordinators User Group to learn more about the system.

The ServasOnline Coordinators User Group, an active team open to administrators in all transitioning countries, discusses many topics related to the functioning of ServasOnline and to managing the completion of ServasOnline profiles for their countries. They discuss procedures and challenges, suggest solutions, support new countries coming onboard, and write user guides for members and administrators (read more about the group in the article below). The ServasOnline Coordinators User Group can be contacted via an email to solncu@servas.org. Please note that only Servas administrators should contact ServasOnline Coordinators User Group.

ServasOnline Coordinators User Group is a group within Servas committees, teams & groups. Judy Bartel is the convenor of the group.

*SERVASONLINE COORDINATORS USER GROUP CONTINUES TO GROW*

The ServasOnline Coordinators User Group (SOLNCU) has become increasingly active as new countries to make the transition to the Servas International member administration system ServasOnline. Judy Bartel from Servas Canada is the convenor of the group, which all members of transitioning countries are invited to join.

This is what the ServasOnline Coordinators User Group does:

- Shares with new groups coming on board what they have learned and so assist them with the transition to ServasOnline. The members of the group are transition coordinators.
- Prepares the Member Help document located on the members page and the User Manual for Administrators on the Administrator side of the website.
- Answers questions from new country coordinators coming on board.

The group is very familiar with the servas.org website and they have discussed the challenges that people

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are having with using the site — including bugs, structural problems, or just things that prevent the site from being user-friendly.

All the topics discussed by the group have been summarized by Judy Bartel in a spreadsheet, along with the development status. The summary list has been integrated with ServasOnline application manager Bernard Andrieu’s fix list. The issues have been divided by website section, adding other things that the members of the ServasOnline Coordinators User Group are yet to discuss.

One conclusion is that the website has to be made more user-friendly.

Many of the development items do not take major coding — often it’s just the wording used, for example to use the word “save” instead of the word “update” to make using the website easier.

A new subgroup called the ServasOnline Review Team has been created to review issues and take decisions about how to make changes to address these difficulties. New members are added on an ongoing basis.

The ServasOnline Coordinators User Group can be contacted via an email to solncu@servas.org.

* KEY PEOPLE UPDATE THEIR SERVASONLINE PROFILE

On February 1 2017 Servas launched a new website on servas.org. Many persons in key Servas positions have since completed their profiles in the ServasOnline system. The key Servas persons who still haven’t completed their profiles can read more about how to do it, the new website and ServasOnline system below.

Please go to the website with one of the languages below and fill in the form.

http://servas.org/en/join-in (English)

or

http://servas.org/fr/join-in (French)

or

http://servas.org/de/join-in (German)

or

http://servas.org/es/join-in (Spanish)

A member of the ServasOnline team will complete your registration and send an automatic message asking you to create a password.

Jonny Sågänger, President, Servas International

Bernard Andrieu, ServasOnline Application Manager
* SERVAS CANADA PILOT: INTRODUCING ELECTRONIC LOI

Beginning on January 1 2018, hosts may receive Letters of Introduction that have only the electronic identification number instead of the traditional and familiar sticker stamp. This is the result of Canada’s project to pilot the electronic LOI (e-LOI), produced from the global membership administration system, Servas Online.

Q: What will an electronic LOI look like?

It will look very similar to LOIs used by most countries. It was developed after examining LOIs from many countries, trying to incorporate all the features that most countries use. A few features may be customized by individual countries.

Q: How can I tell if it is valid?

A valid electronic LOI will have:

1. A stamp number beginning with the year in which it is issued (example: 2018-0001)
2. A “Valid Until” date
3. The signature and contact information of an administrator (interviewer, coordinator or other administrator).
4. A picture of the traveller(s)
5. A “personal background” statement, describing all of the people included in the LOI (including children).

If you have concerns about the validity of a particular LOI, you can look the traveller up online to confirm that these features are in the online profile. A stamp number and “valid until” date can only be added by an administrator. You are also welcome to contact the person who signed the document.

Q: Are single LOIs for more than one person allowed (joint LOIs)?

ServasOnline has been developed based on “one profile per member”; however, the countries implementing it have found this very challenging, especially for host listings. Some countries have allowed joint profiles for hosts. Since many travellers are hosts, it is easier for them to produce joint LOIs.

It should be noted that Servas International has not agreed to allow joint LOIs in the future. It should be noted that the Servas International policy at this point is to promote “one profile per member” and joint LOIs will not be allowed in the future. For this year, however, for the pilot, it has been agreed that Servas Canada may use Joint LOIs. This will give us an opportunity to test their feasibility and to determine whether to use them in the future, and what implications it would have for the development of the future financial module of ServasOnline.

We look forward to the results of the 2018 pilot!

Servas Canada
ServasOnline Team
SI Exco
* A STEP TO REDUCE SICOGA’s ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

Servas International’s global board, SI Exco, has agreed to add the following words to the SICOGA 2018 invitation letter and materials:

*Bearing in mind the ecological footprint of an event such as SICOGA 2018 on the world’s environment, SI Exco will make every effort feasible to minimize its impact. More information about what these efforts will mean, in concrete terms, will be announced later.*

The invitation letter was sent out to Servas national secretaries for distribution to all Servas members on March 19.

Jonny Sågänger, President, Servas International

* TIME FOR SI GA 2018 ELECTION NOMINATIONS

A number of elections are to be held in October 2018 at the Servas International General Assembly (SI GA) in the Republic of Korea. The Nominations Committee is now accepting nominations for positions on the next SI Executive Committee (the global Servas board) and for elected SI officers in the Conflict Resolution Committee, Audit Committee, Development Committee, etc.

Nominations will remain open until immediately before the elections, which take place during the SI GA. It is important, however, that National Groups consider possible nominations well before the SI GA, so active Servas members can come forward, even though they may not be able to attend the General Assembly in person.

If you would like to put yourself forward as a candidate for one of the positions or would like nominate someone else, please contact the SI Nomination Committee by email to nominations@servas.org.

Susanne Thestrup (Denmark) is the convenor of the Nomination Committee, and she working together with Norma Nicholson (Australia).

The Servas International General Assembly (SI GA) is part of the Servas International Conference and General Assembly (SICOGA) which is held every three years. SICOGA 2018 takes place October 13–20 in Seoul. You find more information about SICOGA 2018 here https://servas.org/sicoga2018/

* SERVAS IRAN IS GROWING

Servas in Iran is a young community. It was launched eight years back, in the late summer of 2010, when a friend accidentally visited Servas members in Turkey. She came to Iran with the cool Servas idea and shared it with us whom she knew from similar communities. By the end of 2010, Servas was officially registered in Iran and the exotic Servas journey has been started.

The real experience started with chatting with our first guests about Servas and getting to know its different and lovely concept. At that time we did not have a chance to read and know more about the Servas concept. We got to know Servas through our guests - an experiential learning

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process. I call it the magic of Servas which is all in each of the members, whoever has the chance to be connected to that is in its happiness trap.

Now we have 34 members (both active and non-active) and we are looking forward for having more members in tourist locations. However, we are growing at a sustainable rate, considering that new members should admire Servas values. We have recently built a group to document and share our activities, especially on social media, and chosen a member as a financial officer.

In the last couple of years, we have hosted Servas members from all over the world, mostly from Europe, and we have seen an increase in the number of visitors after the JCPOA agreement. Iran has much to offer and one of the great things about Servas is the chance to get to know locals face to face as well as real life in Iran, which we hear from our guests differs from media reports. So it is good to ask us and for our visitors to know that here it is safe, interesting, exotic as well as different. We can’t wait to see you all here.

By Hossein Sarafraz, Servas Iran

*MEXICAN KNIT NETS WORKSHOP*

Servas Youth and Arts held the workshop Knit Nets; Knit Help, on January 27, at Coyoacán, in México City.

The initiative was promoted by the Coordinator of Youth and Arts of Servas Mexico, Cynthia Granados, and supported by the Mexican Institute for Justice (IMJUS).

This technique of making mats spread around Mexico City after the earthquake of September 19 2017 given the need to provide shelter to people who lost their homes and had to stay outdoors overnight.

At the workshop last Saturday, the aim was to make responsible use of plastic bags and offer a hand to people in need.

About 15 people took part in the workshop, among them the National Secretary of Servas Mexico, Salomón Luna.

Text and pictures: Jorge Rendón.
* ALBANIA A NEW SERVAS COUNTRY*

I grew up in Tirana, the capital of Albania, between the Adriatic Sea and some mountains. As a child I used to ask myself what could be beyond the mountains and the sea?

When I was 12, I climbed Mt. Dajti, near Tirana. I had never climbed a mountain before! It was the most exciting adventure of my life.

Since then I have climbed many mountains, and interacted with the people living near them. I developed an admiration for different cultures, a hunger for knowledge and a love of nature.

On a trip to France in 2014 I met two wonderful people, Monique and Jean. Monique taught me French and she told me about Servas. As someone born in the internet age, it was unimaginable to think how people communicated before.

I started to establish a Servas community in Albania, where there had been none before. Today there are just two members, but I really hope we will grow quickly.

I am planning my first Servas trip to Poland. I look forward to travelling, meeting people, sharing experiences, learning and discovering! I have a strong feeling that it will be more than just that ... it will be something Servas!

*By Gerti Pishtari*

(Edited by Michael Johnson, Servas Canada)

*PEOPLE: NEW NS’S IN BELARUS AND RUSSIA – ROBERTSON AWARDED*

People: Angelika Korab became the National Secretary of Servas Belarus in April 2017. On May 12 this year she and Servas Belarus will give potential Servas members a chance to put theories of intercultural communication into practice. Angelika Korab will lead a Cultural Competence and Communication in Servas workshop.

Since January 2016 Angelika had shared the National Secretary role with Victoria “Vika” Mrochko, who set up Servas in Belarus and then handed this role fully over to Angelika. We would like to thank Vika very much for her contribution to Servas Belarus.

Angelika joined Servas in 2013, and over the past years she has taken part in several activities such as organizing an East European meeting in Baranovichi, hosting Servas members from neighbouring countries - Russia, Ukraine and Poland.

In 2017 another meeting of old members and a few potential ones took place in Minsk https://www.facebook.com/groups/117649068294944/permalink/1663364913723344/.

In 2016 Angelika also created a website http://servas.pl/belarus/ and a Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/servasbelarus/. This was followed by an updated host list; after the number of hosts increased, it was transferred to ServasOnline.

We wish Angelika good luck in her activities.

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People: Christina Buynova has finished her three years as National Secretary for Servas Russia. The role of National Secretary has now been taken on by Yuliya Mezenina, who lives in the city of Krasnoufimsk, in the Ural mountains. Yuliya has been a host for many years and an active member with many creative ideas. She has also participated in the Servas Youth Language Programmes, SYLE. In December 2017 she lead a webinar where members of Servas Russia shared their experiences and answered questions about travelling with Servas. Yuliya Mezenina’s plan is to increase the number of members of Servas Russia, so she runs groups on social networks.

Servas Russia takes part in the Servas Making Connections programme. Russia offers two options for a long stay in the country. And there are more initiatives to come.

In May 2018 for the first time Servas Russia will host an international meeting in the Russia Ural region for members from other countries. To date Yuliya Mezenina has received more than a hundred applications. Please read more about the international meeting in Russia May 25–31 2018 here https://servas.org/en/events-meetings

At the end of 2017 Christina briefed Yuliya about how Servas works. The former National Secretary will be available for Yuliya Mezenina for a while longer and will continue to host with Servas Russia.

People: Graham Robertson, convenor of Servas International Internal Audit Committee (SI IAC), has been awarded Fellowship status by the CA ANZ Council. The fellowship is an honorary title after the Council/Board of the Chartered Accountants – Australia and New Zealand has received endorsement from two other senior Chartered Accountants members and then, in Graham Robertson’s case, approved the endorsement. The Council is the governing body of the Chartered Accountants – Australia and New Zealand. Graham Robertson completed his accounting study and qualifications in New Zealand before moving to Australia with his family in 1969. He is also a member of the Certified Practising Accountants – Australia (CPA).

You can read more about the CA ANZ Council here https://www.charteredaccountantsanz.com/about-us

* WHAT SI EXCO HAS DECIDED – FIND OUT HERE

Minutes from SI Exco meetings are on the Servas International website: https://servas.org/en/community/board-and-management/si-exco
AD: WEBSITE DEVELOPER FOR SI WEBSITE

Servas International is recruiting a Website Developer for the website on servas.org. Servas has developed a collaboration platform called ServasOnline. The first release of ServasOnline is now online.

ServasOnline is a multilingual website, regularly publishing news from member countries in four languages. In the dedicated memberssection of the website, members have access to the database of all members worldwide. Members can select and contact other members all over the world to meet them during their travels.

The website is built with the Drupal CMS (Content Management System) and mySql.

Responsibilities:

- Servas International is recruiting a website developer for our website servas.org.
- As Website Developer (company or individual) you will be responsible for maintenance and enhancements to the ServasOnline website.
- You will report to and work in close collaboration with the Servas Application Manager (currently Bernard Andrieu).

Your activities will cover:

- Continuity of operations (24/7) in collaboration with the system manager in charge of the Servas server (ICT Team)
- Corrective maintenance (bug fixes)
- Improvement of the application (major changes are planned as part of a second release) based on change requests from the Servas App Manager
- Alerts, suggestions and recommendations for better use, user-friendliness, technical coding, performance, responsiveness of the website
- Assistance to the Servas Web Editor in updating web content
- Preparation of communication and training documents related to the application usage and to changes, in collaboration with the ServasOnline Team

Key Skills:

- Good communication and training skills
- Fluent English; other languages such as French, Spanish, German are a plus
- Technical skills: Drupal 7, PHP, mySQL, Linux, HTML, CSS, bootstrap, jQuery.

Additional Information

- Communications – mainly in English – through the ServasOnline website, email, phone, video chat, voice call services, the cloud
- You will work on a teleworking basis
- Our estimate is that this job requires a part-time activity
- Experience with NGO is a plus

About Servas

Servas International is a worldwide non-governmental organization which runs a traveller-host hospitality programme based on values of tolerance between people of different cultures, backgrounds and nationalities.

Read more about Servas: servas.org/

Email your application to Bernard Andrieu, ServasOnline Application Manager: berno.andrieu@orange.fr
AD: APPLICATION MANAGER FOR SI WEBSITE

Servas International is recruiting an Application Manager for the ServasOnline System. Servas has developed a collaboration platform called ServasOnline, which is now up and running. ServasOnline is a multilingual website, regularly publishing news from member countries in four languages.

Servas members have access to the database of all members worldwide. Members can select and contact other members all over the world to meet them during their travels.

The website is built with the Drupal CMS (Content Management System) and mySql.

**Responsibilities:**
- Ongoing maintenance and enhancements to the ServasOnline application.
- You will report to Pablo Colangelo: servasonlinehlc@gmail.com
- Close collaboration with the Webmaster.
- Continuity of operations (24/7)
- Corrective maintenance (bug fixes)
- Enhancements to the application (major changes are planned as part of a second release)
- Assistance to the Webmaster in updating web content
- Support to deployment of the application in member countries (including data migration)
- Assistance to members in the use of the application
- Preparation of communication and training documents related to the application usage and to changes

**Key Skills:**
- Adherence to Servas values
- Good communication and training skills
- Fluent English; other languages such as French, Spanish, German are a plus
- Ability to multitask and good personal organization
- Technical skills: Drupal 7 (a must), PHP, mySQL, Linux, HTML, CSS, bootstrap, jQuery.

**Additional Information**
- Communications – mainly in English – by means of ServasOnline website, email, phone, video chat, voice call services, the cloud, etc.
- You will work on a teleworking basis
- Our estimate is that this job will be a part-time activity
- Experience with an NGO is a plus

Email your application to Bernard Andrieu, ServasOnline Application Manager: berno.andrieu@orange.fr
**AD: EDITORS WANTED FOR SI WEBSITE**

With increased Servas activity on the new Servas website (servas.org) and on social media, there’s also a growing need for editors. A web editor is needed for each language used on the new Servas website. Currently the languages are English, Spanish, French and German.

We’re looking for people of all ages, who have basic, medium or well-developed skills in writing and/or editing editorial texts as well as handling photos, graphics and other illustrations. It’s a plus but not a prerequisite to have experience of editorial work on the web and in a content management system (CMS).

We’re also looking for people with writing, photography and/or graphic design skills who can work as Servas editor-correspondents around the world. Working in cooperation with the web editors on servas.org and the editor of the newsletters SI News Bulletin and SI News, you will create and edit editorial content from around the world.

Send your application to president@servas.org

*Jonny Sågänger, President, Servas International & Managing Web Editor*

**AD: SERVAS FACEBOOK ADMINISTRATORS WANTED**

Servas International’s traffic on the social media channel Facebook is growing, so as soon as possible we need to recruit administrators both for the Servas International Facebook Page and the Servas Travelling for Peace public discussion group.

These are challenging and fulfilling positions for people with the right skills and abilities.

Send your application to president@servas.org

*Jonny Sågänger, President, Servas International*

**SERVAS PUBLIC FACEBOOK GROUP ADMINISTRATOR**

Servas Travelling for Peace is a public Facebook discussion group for people interested in Servas International. You don’t have to be a member of Servas. Membership in this Facebook group does not make you a member of Servas. www.facebook.com/groups/servas/

**Servas Facebook Group Administrator responsibilities:**

- Review and approval of new members - includes reviewing applicants’ Facebook profile for possible spammers
- Daily monitoring of group posts
- Watch for inappropriate posts such as sales, advertising, and promotions not related to Servas and Servas core values, pornography, etc.
- Removal of inappropriate posts and deleting/banning members who spam or continue to post inappropriately.

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**SI FACEBOOK FAN PAGE ADMINISTRATOR**

**Servas International Facebook Page Administrator responsibilities:**
- Monitor and reply to Messages and Notifications if possible or notify Servas Exco of the message if no action has been taken within two days.
- Alerts will appear in your FB’s left-hand column list of your pages and groups.
- Approve or deny posts, monitor discussions.

**NEWSLETTER IN SPANISH**
You can also read the SI News Bulletin in Spanish on the Servas International website.

Would you like to become a member of the translators team? Email Lilly Kerekes, the coordinator: [spanishcoordinator@servas.org](mailto:spanishcoordinator@servas.org)

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**About Servas International News Bulletin**
The Servas International News Bulletin (SI News Bulletin) is a newsletter from Servas International Executive Committee (SI Exco), which is the organization’s global board. The SI News Bulletin contains a brief report about current issues and decisions.

**Editors & Newsletter Coordinators:**
- Jonny Sågänger, SI President [president@servas.org](mailto:president@servas.org)
- Picot Cassidy, Servas Britain
- Itzcóatl (Jorge) Rendon, Mexico
- Christopher Stone, Servas Greece
- Graphic design: Alan Stone, Servas Greece

**What would you like to read about in the SI News Bulletin? Let us know.**
Email: [president@servas.org](mailto:president@servas.org)

Servas key people around the world are encouraged to forward the newsletter to individual members in Servas. Feel free to quote this newsletter, but please remember to mention Servas International News Bulletin as the source.
SI Exco 2016-2018
President: Jonny Sågänger president@servas.org
Vice-President: Ann Greenhough vicepresident@servas.org
Treasurer: Radha B. Radhakrishna treasurer@servas.org (replaced William D'Souza January 2018)
General Secretary: Penny Pattison generalsecretary@servas.org
Host List Coordinator: Pablo Colangelo hostlistcoordinator@servas.org
Peace Secretary: Danielle Serres peacesecretary@servas.org

Servas International on the Internet
Servas International website: servas.org/index.php
Servas on Twitter: twitter.com/ServasI?lang=en
Servas on Facebook:
Servas Travelling for Peace
• This public discussion group is for people who are interested in learning more about Servas International. Membership in a recognized Servas Group is not required. Membership in this Facebook group does not make you a member of Servas.
• Administrators: Alan Stone, Stefan Fagerström, Pablo Colangelo, Jonny Sågänger.
• Moderators: Carla Kristensen, Jae Kwoang Park.
www.facebook.com/groups/servas/

Servas International
This closed discussion group is for people who are members of Servas. Your membership will be verified.
• Administrators: Pablo Colangelo, Arnoud Philippo.
www.facebook.com/groups/117649068294944/

About Servas International
Servas International is an international, non-profit, non-governmental federation of national Servas groups, supporting an international network of hosts and travellers. Our network aims to help build world peace, goodwill and understanding by offering opportunities for personal contacts between people of different cultures, backgrounds and nationalities.