Travel Promotes Peace

Celebrating HER

Celebrating Her Awards

Award Winners 2016–2024

Honouring women who lead by example in travel and tourism
and use it as a force for peace, understanding and sustainability.

Presented by the International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT) India
in partnership with ITB Berlin

31
women honoured since 2016

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Award Winners at a Glance

31 women honoured from 2016 to 2024

Year	Winner	Award
2024	**Suma Venkatesh**	Inclusion and Diversity
	Marija Labović	Tourism Policy
	Adrianna Kruger	Sustainable Tourism
	Julia Simpson	"Superwoman of Tourism" Special Jury Award
	Rika Jean-François	"Torchbearer for Sustainability & Inclusivity" Special Jury Award
2022/2023	**Rupinder Brar**	Tourism Leadership
	Carol Hay	Tourism Resilience
	Iaia Pedemonte	Responsible Tourism
2020/2021	**Petra Hedorfer**	Tourism Policy and Leadership
	Sonal Asgotraa	Community Development Through Tourism
	Natalia Bayona	Innovation and Empowerment of Women Through Tourism
2019	**H.E. Rania al Mashat**	Tourism Policy and Leadership
	Elena Kontoura	Tourism Strategy and Resilience
	Helen Marano	Building Global Alliances that promote Tourism as a Force for Good
	Jane Madden	Sustainability and promoting Corporate Social Responsibility
	Mechtild Maurer	Socially Responsible Tourism
2018	**Sandra Howard Taylor**	Tourism to Transform Communities
	Isabel Hill	Tourism Policy
	Caroline Bremner	Tourism Research and Education
	Daniela Wagner	Building Global Alliances That Promote Tourism as a Force for Good
	Dr. Jyotsna Suri	Tourism Leadership
2017	**Ishita Khanna**	Community Eco Tourism
	Ha Lam	Using Technology to Empower Local Communities
	Claudia Brözel	Tourism Education
	Ruth Hopfer-Kubsch	Responsible Tourism
	Mmatšatši Ramawela	Tourism Leadership
2016	**Dr. Nicole Häusler**	Community Based Tourism
	Aileen Clemente	Tourism and Peace
	Dr. Dietlind von Lassberg	Tourism Education
	Jane Ashton	Tourism Sustainability
	Valsa Nair Singh	Innovation in Tourism

Award Winner 2024

for Inclusion and Diversity



Suma Venkatesh

Suma Venkatesh, Executive Vice President – Real Estate & Development and Asset Management at The Indian Hotels Company Ltd (IHCL), was awarded for Inclusion and Diversity.

An electrical engineer by training with a Master's in Management Studies from Mumbai University, she leads IHCL's development, technical services and projects functions, driving the group's growth through greenfield developments, acquisitions, licences and management contracts.

Award Winner 2024

for Tourism Policy



Marija Labović

Marija Labović, CEO and Managing Director of the National Tourism Organisation of Serbia since 2015, was awarded for Tourism Policy.

A member of Serbia's National Council for the Development of Tourism since 2016 and a Board member of the European Travel Commission from 2018 to 2021, she has made an important contribution to positioning Serbia as a prominent tourist destination.

Award Winner 2024

for Sustainable Tourism



Adrianna Kruger

Adrianna Kruger, founder of Tzaneen Country Lodge in Limpopo province, South Africa, was awarded for Sustainable Tourism.

A self-taught hotelier, she opened the lodge in 2000 as a four-room guest house and built it into a four-star hotel with a spa and conference centre. In 2013 it was named the best responsible-tourism business in Africa by SATOA.

Special Jury Award 2024

“Superwoman of Tourism”



Julia Simpson

Julia Simpson, President & CEO of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), received the Special Jury Award “Superwoman of Tourism”. In her keynote at the 2024 Celebrating Her awards she spoke of the close link between tourism and peace, and of giving women in positions of power a greater say in a conflict-ridden world.

Before WTTC she spent 14 years in aviation, including board roles at British Airways and Iberia and as Chief of Staff of International Airlines Group (IAG), and was a senior adviser to a UK Prime Minister.

Special Jury Award 2024

“Torchbearer for Sustainability & Inclusivity”



Rika Jean-François

Rika Jean-François, CSR Commissioner of ITB Berlin, received the Special Jury Award “Torchbearer for Sustainability & Inclusivity” in recognition of her many years of commitment.

A champion of the Celebrating Her awards at ITB Berlin, she believes that recognising and empowering women is crucial for promoting peace and sustainability.

Award Winner 2022/2023

for Tourism Leadership



Rupinder Brar

Rupinder Brar worked in the Ministry of Tourism as the Additional Director General when COVID completely halted travel and tourism.

The need was to devise out-of-box strategies to keep the industry afloat. For a country of India's size and diversity the challenges were huge but so was the opportunity to showcase Incredible India's diverse offerings to a domestic market. The innovative “Dekho Apna Desh” campaign, initiated by her, which translates as “See your own Country” played a huge role in keeping the domestic industry afloat.

Award Winner 2022/2023

for Tourism Resilience



Carol Hay

Carol only travelled at the age of 18 from the United Kingdom to Jamaica where her parents were born. That trip to discover her culture & heritage changed her life, propelling her into the world of travel & tourism.

After two decades in the Caribbean, Carol returned to the UK to head up Antigua and Barbuda's UK + European marketing division, followed by 11 strong years with the Caribbean Tourism Organisation as Director for UK and Europe. Since 2020, Carol has headed her own tourism development agency McKenzie Gayle Limited which lead the Caribbean Tourism Organisation Chapter UK and Europe.

Award Winner 2022/2023

for Responsible Tourism



Iaia Pedemonte

Iaia, a freelance journalist, is the founder of the Gender Responsible Tourism Association (GRT), a team of communication, responsible tourism and gender experts promoting women's empowerment in tourism.

As a communications and information group, GRT publishes information about the best travel destinations where women are the protagonists. It is also the antenna of a global network, receiving, transmitting and linking up with initiatives, individual women, enterprises, associations and institutions.

Award Winner 2020/2021

in Tourism Policy and Leadership



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Petra Hedorfer

Her mandate has been market research and planning for national and international marketing, relaunch of the global Germany portal for end users and for the travel industry and the overall development of the German National Tourist Board into a worldwide marketing and sales organization, with an emphasis on expansion of activities in the new markets of Eastern Europe, Asia and the Gulf States.

Award Winner 2020/2021

in Community Development Through Tourism



Sonal Asgotraa

Mountain homestays is a community empowerment initiative that focuses on promoting rural destinations by creating livelihood opportunities at the doorsteps of these isolated villages and developing homestays in partnership with the locals. The focus is on reaching out to communities living in the remotest parts of the Himalayan belt in India, such as the Ladakh region in northern India, to promote sustainable and inclusive progress.

Award Winner 2020/2021

Innovation and Empowerment of Women Through Tourism



Natalia Bayona

Natalia is the leader of the Innovation and Digital Transformation Strategy of the UNWTO. An accomplished professional in Government and International Relations, with great competence in the areas of foreign trade, tourism, marketing, relations and international business, Natalia is focused on sustainable tourism and has introduced entrepreneurship and education as key factors for tourism and development.

Award Winner 2019

for Tourism Policy and Leadership



H.E. Rania al Mashat

H.E. Rania al Mashat - Minister of Tourism for Egypt for Tourism Policy and Leadership to elevate the message and image of Egypt by drafting the E—TRP, the Egypt—Tourism Reform Program aimed at addressing structural reforms that has helped the sector in achieving its full potential.

Award Winner 2019

for Tourism Strategy and Resilience



Elena Kontoura

Elena Kontoura, Tourism Minister of Greece, was awarded for Tourism Strategy and Resilience, for implementing a new tourism strategy for Greece: 365-days destination to promote different areas in Greece that have not always been at the forefront of tourists' minds and demonstrate that the country is more than just a summer hotspot.

Award Winner 2019

for Building Global Alliances that promote Tourism as a Force for Good



Helen Marano

Helen Marano – Founder & President, Marano Perspectives for Building Global Alliances that promote Tourism as a Force for Good engaging multiple stakeholders, both from within a private sector membership organizations as well as from a government top level leadership positions.

Award Winner 2019

for Sustainability and promoting Corporate Social Responsibility



Jane Madden

Jane Madden – Managing Partner, Global Sustainability & Social Impact, FINN Partners for Sustainability and promoting Corporate Social Responsibility by helping clients across the globe shape and transform their business to improve both financial and societal impact.

Award Winner 2019

for Socially Responsible Tourism



Mechtild Maurer

Mechtild Maurer – General Director, ECPAT Germany for promoting Socially Responsible Tourism & the Prevention of Exploitation of Children by making tourism companies adopt the child protection code as an effective measure to prevent sexual exploitation of children.

Award Winner 2018

for Tourism to Transform Communities



Ms. Sandra Howard Taylor

As Colombia's Vice Minister of Tourism, where the development of sustainable tourism has been one of her main objectives, Sandra Taylor was awarded for encouraging strong tourism industry that values the human experiences and cultural exchange.

Award Winner 2018

for Tourism Policy



Ms. Isabel Hill

Ms. Isabel Hill, a leader in tourism policy and planning, was awarded for leading the development of the first National Travel and Tourism Strategy for the United States across 12 agencies and with the private sector to foster the competitiveness of U.S. travel and tourism industries in collaboration with the private sector and other federal agencies.

Award Winner 2018

for Tourism Research and Education



Ms. Caroline Bremner

As a global thought leader and Head of Travel Research at Euromonitor, Caroline Bremner was awarded for working with Analysts across 100 countries to drive strategic insights and playing an integral role in creating the most extensive travel and tourism intelligence system as used by leading destinations, governments and travel brands around the world.

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Award Winner 2018

for Building Global Alliances That Promote Tourism as a Force for Good



Ms. Daniela Wagner

Daniela, Director of International Partnerships, Jacobs Media Group, was awarded for her responsibility of creating new international events in Asia, the Middle East and Europe, as well as bringing new clients into the UK market as an enthusiastic, energetic and personable general manager with a 30-year track record of outstanding achievement in the travel industry.

Award Winner 2018

for Tourism Leadership



Dr. Jyotsna Suri

Dr Jyotsna Suri, Chairperson & MD of Lalit Hotels, was awarded for leading the traditionally modern, subtly luxurious and distinct – Lalit Suri Hospitality Group as India's largest privately owned hotel chain with 13 luxury hotels having 3,600 rooms in India and one in London.

Award Winner 2017

for Community Eco Tourism



Ms. Ishita Khanna

Co-founder of Ecosphere, Ms. Ishita was awarded for her efforts towards a holistic development of the Spiti region encompassing livelihood programs that enable a linkage to conservation concerns, climate change adaption & water access, carbon reduction & renewable energy, health & education, to enabling compassionate communities.

Award Winner 2017

for Using Technology to Empower Local Communities



Ms. Ha Lam

In 2013, Ha Lam co-founded Triip.me in Vietnam. She was awarded for connecting travelers and local experts around the globe on a sharing economy platform focused on creating unique local experiences in 92 countries and 635 cities with over 4,500 hand-picked tours.

Award Winner 2017

for Tourism Education



Ms. Claudia Brözel

Claudia Brözel, Professor at University of Sustainable Development – Germany, was awarded for her excellent work for around 25 years in the tourism industry as a freelancer, for encouraging students especially women, and teaching them using field trips, small projects and presentations.

Award Winner 2017

for Responsible Tourism



Ms. Ruth Hopfer-Kubsch

Being engaged in tourism for more than 30 years, Ruth Hopfer-Kubsch, Director of Studiosus Foundation – Germany, was awarded for her significant contribution towards Responsible and respectful tourism, Tourism with tolerance & openness and without xenophobia & discrimination in own country as well as abroad to strengthen human rights worldwide.

Award Winner 2017

for Tourism Leadership



Ms. Mmatšatši Ramawela

Responsible for Strategic Management of the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA) which is the umbrella organization for organized businesses in the travel and tourism sector in South Africa, Mmatšatši Ramawela (CEO) was awarded for her outstanding career & work in the travel and tourism industry spanning over 20 years and developing tourism in South Africa.

Award Winner 2016

for Community Based Tourism



Dr. Nicole Häusler

Dr. Nicole Häusler was awarded for her intense work for more than 15 years as a Responsible Tourism Consultant, mainly in Southeast Asia (viz., Myanmar), focusing her work on Responsible Tourism Management & Training, the implementation of CSR and Tourism & Poverty Reduction.

Award Winner 2016

for Tourism and Peace



Ms. Aileen Clemente

Second generation owner of Rajah Travel Corporation and Executive Vice President of the Tourism Congress of the Philippines (TCP), Aileen has been awarded for working on rekindling history that have been forgotten and create opportunity not only for tourism activities to take place but for people to remember courage and heroism in the face of conflict.

Award Winner 2016

for Tourism Education



Dr. Dietlind von Lassberg

Under her leadership, the Institute for Tourism & Development – Germany, has organized the international TOURA D´OR – Film Contest for sustainable tourism as well as the renowned TO DO! contest for Socially Responsible Tourism. She has been awarded for her educational work in various fields such as sustainable tourism development, tourism advisory, etc.

Award Winner 2016

for Tourism Sustainability



Ms. Jane Ashton

Ms. Jane, Director of Sustainability, TUI Group, UK and Executive Board Member of the Global Council for Sustainable Tourism was awarded for her contributions towards tourism sustainability viz., heavy involvement in setting up world's first sustainable tourism charity – the Travel Foundation and in the creation of the sustainable tourist accommodation certification body – Travelife.

Award Winner 2016

for Innovation in Tourism



Ms. Valsa Nair Singh

Ms. Valsa Nair Singh, Tourism & Culture Secretary, Govt. of Maharashtra, India was awarded for her several new and innovative policies viz., Green Ideas, the Environment Service Scheme in schools, the Certificate course for STP operators, GREEN GANESHA, Noiseless Diwali, etc. She was instrumental in drafting the Environment Friendly Guidelines for the construction sector.