



NEWS BULLETIN

FROM THE SERVAS INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

– News from Servas International Executive Committee (Exco) –

===== Vol. 12 No 1 March/April 2019 =====

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SIX COUNTRIES TO ISSUE E-LOI IN 2019

After piloting E-LOIs in Canada in 2018, the programme has been rolled out to more countries in an expanded pilot for 2019. In 2019, France, Israel, Belgium, Sweden and Singapore are also issuing LOIs through Servas Online.

The initial roll-out has been well received. According to Judy Bartel, a member of the Servas Online team, “The roll-out has been interesting. People are for the most part very impressed with how it works!”

But, she also pointed out that despite a lot of testing there have been some bugs that are still being worked through.

The expanded roll-out is helping Servas to test the system rigorously before it is rolled out worldwide as a system.

For more information contact Judy Bartel: judy.bartel@gmail.com

Radha B. Radhakrishna, SI Treasurer

SERVAS YOUTH AND FAMILY ACTIVITIES 2019

The Servas International Youth and Families Committee is organising many activities around the world during 2019. Some of them will celebrate the Servas 70th anniversary this year. These youth and family activities include:

- * Volunteering experience in the Intercultural Karnival in Sweden from May 20 to May 28
- * Volunteering course from July 2 to July 5 in Turkey
- * Peace School from July 6 to 14 in Turkey and Youth Cinema School from July 17 to 21 in Turkey
- * International Youth and Families summer camp in Italy from August 25 to August 31
- * International Youth environmental work camp in Spain from September 2 to September 8

For more information on these activities, see <https://servas.org/en/events-meetings>

Servas volunteers in other countries are preparing additional events. This list will be updated as soon as these new events are ready to be announced.

All Servas members are encouraged to spread the word about the youth and family activities.

Servas volunteers are also encouraged to collect names and email addresses of people in these categories:

1. Young people (18-30 years old)
2. Minors (14-17 years old)
3. Families with children

Please send the name, age and email address to youth@servas.org or youthandfamilies@servas.org.

Susana Martinez (Spain), Raffaella Rota (Italy), Aneris Cao (Chile), Mar Ferre Gonzalez (Spain) & Natasha Noreen (Italy)
Servas International Youth and Families Committee

KICK-STARTING YOUTH AND FAMILIES ACTION PLAN

The SI Youth and Families Committee is also inviting all Servas members around the world to promote Servas among young people. One easy way is to support our young members, so many countries are starting a Servas Youth and Families action plan. We will send you a document with ideas to start off, and also a PowerPoint presentation if you are able to present this plan in your own national assembly. One of the ideas is to help our young people attend an international Servas event, so many countries are giving small grants to young people to support them in these particular events.

Any questions? Please send them to youth@servas.org or youthandfamilies@servas.org.

Welcome to the Servas Youth and Families events and for your help in advertising them!!!

Susana Martinez (Spain), Raffaella Rota (Italy), Aneris Cao (Chile), Mar Ferre Gonzalez (Spain) & Natasba Noreen (Italy)
Servas International Youth and Families Committee

INCREASED SI REPRESENTATION AT UNITED NATIONS

“The accreditation for Servas representatives at the United Nations is annual, and we are starting this new year with some new people,” says Danielle Serres, coordinator of Servas International’s representation at the United Nations. Her official United Nations title is Chief Administrative Officer. Danielle Serres is also Servas representative in Geneva.

The new representatives are Gopal Rajan (Servas USA), Martin Henner (Servas USA), René Steimer (Servas Switzerland) and Mauro Pellegrino (Servas Italy), who recently joined the United Nations team.

“We hope for a positive, energetic and cooperative year for all of us representing Servas International at the UN in New York City, Geneva and Vienna,” says Danielle Serres.

Since 1973 Servas International (SI) has had consultative status as an international NGO (non- governmental organisation) with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at the United Nations. The consultative status makes it possible for SI to be active at the United Nations in New York City in USA, Geneva in Switzerland and Vienna in Austria.

The Servas International representatives at the United Nations attend sessions, help Servas members wanting to visit UN venues, give out information about United Nations principles and activities, co-sign joint NGO statements, and at times are able to deliver written or oral declaration on behalf of Servas. They are also able to organise side events on different issues.

The Servas International representatives with the United Nations are:

- New York City: Jeanne Devine, Fanny Bello and Gopal Rajan
- Geneva: Daniela Doenges, Lorette Dubout, Martin Henner, René Steimer, Mauro Pellegrino and Danielle Serres
- Vienna: Angelika Hofmann, Benjamin Zucali and Mauro Pellegrino

You can find individual presentations from the representatives on the Servas website at:

<https://servas.org/en/Servas-and-the-UnitedNations>

About ECOSOC

UN ECOSOC is the only main United Nations body with a formal framework for NGO participation. NGOs may contribute to a number of activities, including circulating information, awareness raising, development education, policy advocacy, joint projects, and in contributing services and technical expertise.

STRONG SERVAS WOMEN DO TRAVEL - AND HOST TOO

WOMEN TRAVELLING: This article by Giulia-Nemeye Giubertoni from Italy is the fourth in a series of stories about women's experiences travelling with Servas. The stories will appear on servas.org, on Facebook and other social media. Please enjoy reading the stories as they are published. If you have stories please email them to president@servas.org

Jonny Sägänger, President, Servas International

Hey everybody!

By Giulia-Nemeye Giubertoni

Now a 25 years old Servas traveller • Member of Servas Italy



I'd like to share with you some reflections on my beautiful trip to the city of Rio de Janeiro and through the state of Minas Gerais. During my six-day stay in southeastern Brazil a lot of strong and independent Servas women were involved: me (modestly!), my coworker and travel companion Valeria, in Rio our first carioca host Madel and our second carioca host Yara, crazily sweet mineira Isabela (and her family) in Minas Gerais, and Italian Brazilian Chiara, who was mineira with a touch of Puglia.

First let me introduce myself and my story. As a 23-year-old graduate language student, I simply decided I wanted to do something different after my degree, and more specifically to do some charity work.

After taking a Portuguese Brazilian language class at my Italian university in Venice, I applied for a social-work programme which included helping a cooperative of North Brazilian farmers in the state of Para, so that I could improve my knowledge of Brazil and the Latin American way of life.

Eight months into the programme, I was assigned to the community of Santa Lucia do Para, along with my Italian colleague Valeria. As a rural and simple Brazilian reality, it was a far cry both geographically and culturally from the big Brazilian cities known worldwide, such as Rio de Janeiro and Belo Horizonte. That's why we decided to plan a trip and head for the south.

Let's meet the other women on my trip.



Valeria - *Valeria and I worked together from October 2016 to October 2017, that is to say exactly a year. When we left Italy for Brazil that we barely knew each other, and slowly became friends and, of course, travel companions. Valeria is very creative and original. What I like about her is that she is so spontaneous, and we have very deep and sincere conversations.*

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Valeria became a Servas member last year, after I told her about the advantages, and better and more enriching experiences you can have when visiting cities and people this way. In this picture we had just hiked and climbed up to the top of Sugarloaf (Pão de Açúcar) Mountain in Rio de Janeiro. We were just so happy and proud of our “extreme sport” activity. Even more so because you can get to the top of the peak for free, and you can go down in the cable car for free as well.



Madel (centre) - Our first three carioca days were with Madel in Rio. She is a sweet Servas woman living in Praia do Flamengo, in the centre of the city. In her seventies now, Madel has worked as a sociologist and as a professor.

Very open to other cultures and well-informed about the world, Madel was a very interesting person with a lot of stories, and a passion for French movies.

Valeria and I stayed at her place for two nights, and we had dinner with her once. It was great to have been hosted by her because she put us in touch with one of her daughter's friends with whom we hiked up Sugarloaf Mountain.

For a 70-year-old lady, Madel is extremely energetic and dynamic!



Yara (centre)- I couldn't describe our second Servas carioca host, Yara, without making sure to say she is a lovely woman with an incredibly kind heart. . .she's so polite, too! Yara is the sort of person who is always willing to help anyone. We felt so good at her place, and I simply loved the trips in her little red car, from the moment we met her for the first time when she picked us up at a subway stop.

Yara is a Brazilian mother and grandmother whose son, daughter-in-law and grandson live abroad, in the Netherlands, if I'm not mistaken. Consequently, every year she travels to Europe to spend time with her family. It's a long trip, and shows how much she values family and commitment to the relationships and the people in her life. I cannot think too highly of her.



Isabela (and me) - If I was born in Brazil, I think I would be one of Isabela's friends for sure. But it doesn't matter, because even if I was born in Italy, I consider myself a good friend of Isabela's! Isa is very like me. She studies languages at university and loves travelling – and this is why she is in Servas. We had a great connection from the very start, even if we had not met before, and only exchanged emails

before she came to Bergamo (my Italian home town) for her Servas Youth Linguistic Experience (SYLE).

Let me tell you about this girl's strong, brave character. Isa came to Europe for an Erasmus programme in Germany in 2015. Then, in 2016 in Ireland, she attended a course in prepara-

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tion for the CELTA certificate, an initial teacher-training qualification for teaching English as a second or foreign language. To make the most of her experience overseas, she decided to travel and visit my beautiful country before going back home.

Thanks to her smiling attitude and positivity, Isabela couldn't help making a lot of friends throughout her stay in Europe. She visited some of her university friends and Servas people. For the last week in Italy, she even worked in a hostel in the south of Italy, in Calabria.

Isabela and I met again, and this second time was in her Latin American country.

My Italian colleague Valeria and I decided to spend our holidays in June in Minas Gerais, a state in the northern part of southeastern Brazil. I met Isa's family, who were so welcoming and guided us around their home city of Divinópolis and accompanied us to Tiradentes, Belo Horizonte. Servas is not simply about seeing places, though; it is very much about the experiences you have there.

Well, I have to mention the fantastic, exquisite welcome lunch Isabela's mother prepared - roast pork in pineapple jam with Brazil nuts and... I have no idea what else there was in this dish, just believe me, I have never tasted anything to compare with it!

I also loved the fact that Isabela, who got to know me in Italy, remembered I enjoy running and invited me to an evening run with her sport group.



Chiara - Last but not least is Chiara, a university student at São João del Rei (SJDR). As her name has probably already suggested to you... well, yes, this lovely girl is Italian-Brazilian, born in Brazil but of southern Italian origin.

Chiara has been part of Servas since the day she met Isabela, while they were sharing a ride from their home city of Divinópolis back to the university in São João del Rei.

Funny and cute, Chiara is also very fond of cookies. As well as studying, in her free time she teaches Italian to a small group of students at the University of São João del Rei. She has a lovely fat cat named Buddha that sleeps on her bed.

We stayed in her apartment in the centre of the city - a typical small and cosy student house, full of colourful cups and lots of toothbrushes in the bathroom. I enjoyed meeting her and her group of university student friends. We went out for a beer and had good time with them. Thanks to Chiara and Isa, who have both been students in SJDR, we got even invited to a *república de estudantes*, that is, a Brazilian version of a frat house.

I really appreciated my time in SJDR, because the city is a historic Brazilian city with a lot of 18th-century architecture. It also reminded me of the good time I had going out, for a coffee or (just sometimes) beer and wine after class when I was a student in Italy!

Travelling is so enriching. In my case it let me get to know many different people, especially when I was travelling with Servas people and staying with Servas hosts. I will remember so

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many of these people and keep them in my heart, and I think of the women from these six days as friends, as hosts, as temporary mothers or grandmothers.

Travelling is freedom and freedom has no gender, but the truth is, women may experience harassment and abuse even when they are not travelling alone. To suggest that any woman should stop travelling alone is certainly not a solution. What it is needed is to change our way of seeing solo travellers, and to improve gender equality, safety and opportunities for women just like me, Valeria, Madel, Yara, Isabela and Chiara to travel and meet other dynamic women from other countries.

About Servas and Giulia-Nemeye Giubertoni



My Giubertoni family has been part of the international Servas family since I can remember. My first Servas memory was when I was probably seven years old and we hosted a Servas traveller, an Australian guy cycling around Europe. His visit caused me a lot of anxiety mixed with curiosity, because back then I didn't like to speak English (to the very young kid I was it seemed "an enigmatic, funny and basically impossible language"). Now I am one of the informal contacts for young Italian people who are interested in Servas and in our cultural exchange programmes such as SYLE (Servas Youth Linguistic Experience).

SERVAS ONLINE WORK GOING ON ...

Managing and developing ServasOnline is a big task for Servas. Often, member countries work in different ways and it sometimes is not possible to fulfil everybody's wishes. A team of highly dedicated Servas members are working on ServasOnline, both on continuously improving the system, as well as on assisting member countries with migrating their data. To keep you informed about some major developments, the team plans to publish the most important changes in the following section of SI News Bulletin (please read the article with the headline current servasonline activities below.

In 2019, focus is on migrating all countries to ServasOnline, in order to provide a complete database for Servas travellers. At the same time, preparations are made to prepare next generation ServasOnline that is expected to improve access from smartphones and communicate with local membership administration systems.

Are your country's members on ServasOnline already? Would you like to get involved in improving ServasOnline? Would you like to help – with technical skills in web development or creating documentation etc.? Please get in touch with tech-secretary@servas.org!

Andreas Becker, SI Membership & Technology Secretary

CURRENT SERVASONLINE ACTIVITIES

A team of highly dedicated Servas members are working on ServasOnline, both on continuously improving the system, as well as on assisting member countries with migrating their data.

Here you can read about the most recent changes and developments:

ServasOnline now produces THE “Letter of Introduction” including “eStamps” & consistent numbering. Servas Canada’s experience from last year’s trial were considered and the corresponding functionality improved. The pilot has been expanded to include 10 more countries, so you will be seeing more e-LOIs. We expect this feature to be open to all countries next year.

Today, many individual members are not used to updatING their profiles, though this is expected to improve with time. Many improvements have been made to the member administration functionality in ServasOnline to help host list coordinators with this task.

Provide a “Day Host” role

What’s ahead

* Several changes to database and upload functionality necessary to encourage all countries to upload their members’ profiles to ServasOnline.

* Some improvements to hosting section to simplify entering the profile and improve search results.

Andreas Becker, SI Membership & Technology Secretary

MAIL ART FOR SERVAS 70TH ANNIVERSARY

For the Servas 70th anniversary, in Montpellier (France), Jean-Luc TURLURE organised an exhibition of mail art called Tous Timbrés. Mail art is a populist art movement where people send small-scale works - decorated envelopes marked “mail art” - through the post.

See Emmanuelle Fèvre, from Servas in Dijon (France), give a great performance at the exhibition at <https://youtu.be/mqGqgxb1U>

Continue to send Servas Artists mail art on themes of peace, friendship, fellowship through travel and meeting.

The next exhibition on the theme of Colombia and peace takes place in May 2019 in Montpellier.

Servas Artists promotes all forms of expression and creation; it is an excellent way to communicate and pass on a message. Let’s circulate peace!

Email: artists@servas.org

Postal address: servas-artists c/o Jean-Luc Turlure

42 avenue St Lazare Bt 3

34000 Montpellier (France)

<https://www.art-and-peace.org>

By Jean-Luc Turlure

PEOPLE: NEW SERVAS KEY PEOPLE

SERVAS ITALY

Servas Italy's board: Mauro Pellegrino, Prisca Salmieri, Francesco Castracane, Alfredo Rubino, Raffaella Rota, Antonio Calvagno and Antonia Coccozza.

Italy has elected a new Exco in the General Assembly held in Torino in November 2018.

Names and roles of people elected:

- Alfredo Rubino: National Secretary, replacing Franco Corsi
- Antonia Coccozza: National Deputy, replacing Ana Cristina Siragusa
- Prisca Salmieri: Treasurer, replacing Roberto Alberini
- Mauro Pellegrino: Membership Secretary
- Antonio Calvagno: Host List Coordinator
- Francesco Castracane: Communication
- Raffaella Rota: Peace Secretary, replacing Uwe Federer. Raffaella Rota is also contact person for Youth and Families activities.

SERVAS FINLAND

Since November 2018 Arja Sigfrids is National Secretary of Finland, replacing Minna-Maaria Vuollo.

Other board members:

- Leena Juth: Treasurer
- Otto Mäkela: IT Coordinator
- Katarina Walker: Newsletter Editor

SERVAS BAHRAIN

Good news! Servas is just about to start in Bahrain, an island in the Persian Gulf.

Since November 2018 Usha Nenwani is the Main Contact of Servas Bahrain.

Thank you Usha, for joining and welcome to the global Servas family. Good luck with Servas!

SERVAS BHUTAN

Since November 2018 we have our first contact in Servas Bhutan!

Bida Tamang is the first member in Bhutan, a country in South Asia.

Welcome Bida for joining the international Servas family. Good luck with Servas!

SERVAS BELGIUM & LUXEMBURG

Daisy Hubert is National Secretary from January 2019, replacing Bénédicte de Bellefroid who had this role for three years.

Daisy Hubert is also Travel Coordinator.

Other members of the board:

- Sylvia Van de Wouwer: Host List Coordinator and ServasOnline Administrator
- Roos Van Mullem: Travel Coordinator

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SERVAS ARGENTINA

Maria Elena Gnecco was appointed as National Secretary in January 2019, replacing Ana Manghi.

Other board members:

- Guillermina Enid Koch: Deputy
- Cintia Amor: Peace Secretary, new board member
- Zulma Sanchez: Treasurer
- Ana Manghi: Host List Coordinator
- Maria Angeles Andrieu: Youth Contact

SERVAS UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Some changes in the USA board:

David Schwartz: Peace Secretary, replacing Paige Lacombe elected as SI Peace Secretary in the General Assembly in Korea, October 2018

Grace Lovell is the new Main Contact, replacing Tracy Jordan French.

Other board members:

- Chris-Ann Lauria: National Secretary
- Mogerma Dennis: Deputy
- Steve Kanters: Treasurer
- Office Servas: Helpdesk

SERVAS KOREA

Servas Korea has new board members appointed at the executive meeting held in January 2019.

Names names and roles of new board members:

- Byung-hun Lee: National Secretary-President, replacing Byung-wan Choi
- Sang-kee Song: Deputy, replacing Jong-won Lee
- Kyu-ok Kim: Peace Secretary
- Nam-hui Kim: Treasurer, replacing Jae-kyung Lee
- Yun Ja Choi: Newsletter Editor
- Hyon-suk Chong: Host list Coordinator and Web Manager, replacing Jae-kwoang Park, HLC

SERVAS NEW ZEALAND

- Robert Howell resigned as National Secretary in February 2019.
- Marijke Batenburg and Derek Carver: Joint interim National Secretaries until the end of April, hoping to confirm someone in the role of NS during the next AGM.
- Derek Carver: Host List Coordinator and ServasOnline Administrator
- Marijke Batenburg: Newsletter Editor
- Other board members:
- Saskia Schuitemaker: Peace Secretary
- Michelle D'Souza: Treasurer
- Jessica Andres: IT Coordinator

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SERVAS ESTONIA

In February 2019 Jana Reikop accepted to be Main Contact (MC) for Servas Estonia. Due to lack of time Jana resigned many years ago as MC. Welcome back Jana and good luck with Servas Estonia!

SERVAS PORTUGAL

Servas Portugal has a new management board since the annual meeting at the end of February 2019. The board will serve for three years from 2019 to 2021.

The new board:

- Cristina Benedita: National Secretary and Host List Coordinator. Cristina
- replaces Claudina Machado
- Carla Kristensen: Deputy, new board member
- Isabel Chaves: Treasurer

*Rita Dessauvage, SI Dolphin Team
Member Servas Belgium*

UPDATE ON SERVAS INTERNATIONAL FINANCES

The stamp fee receivable for 2018 was CHF 54,185. (For 2017 and 2016, it was CHF 56,539 and CHF 57,699 respectively). We are pleased to report that all the countries that owed stamp fees have been paying their dues satisfactorily as we go to press. We are on track to close the account on 31st March this year. Once we do that, we will let you know in the next bulletin whether we managed to break-even for 2018-19 or finished the year in the red. Watch out for that and other details in the next bulletin.

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 www.facebook.com/groups/servas/

- 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 Sägänger.
- Moderators: Carla Kristensen, Jae Kwoang Park.

Servas International www.facebook.com/groups/117649068294944/

- This closed discussion group is for people who are members of Servas. Your membership will be verified.
- Administrators: Pablo Colangelo, Arnoud Philipppo.

SERVAS NEWS BULLETIN AVAILABLE IN SPANISH

You can also read the SI News Bulletin in Spanish on the Servas International website.

Join the Servas Translators Team. Email Lilly Kerekes, the coordinator: spanishcoordinator@servas.org

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.

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Itzcóatl (Jorge) Rendon, Mexico

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What would you like to read about in the SI News Bulletin? Let us know.

Email: president@servas.org

We encourage Servas key people around the world to forward this bulletin to individual members. Feel free to quote this bulletin but please remember to mention Servas International News Bulletin as the source.

SI EXCO 2018-2021

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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.