



# ANNUAL REPORT

2021

A year of stories highlighting the  
power of travel and tourism.

July, 2022





# A letter from the CEO

Dear Friends,

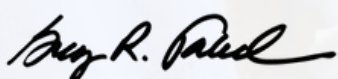
We take the time to download another year and when we reflect on 2021, it will undoubtedly be one of shaking heads – in a way that reflects our frustration of how the pandemic did not go away as we thought it would, but also because we continued to see the devastating effects of climate change and racial intolerance peaking. We further began to experience the great resignation, a workforce challenge never seen before in our industry.

But we also shook our heads affirmatively here at Tourism Cares, as our membership grew, with a heightened focus on sustainability. We brought on some 75 new professional/individual members, as well as many new friends into our community. We continue to unite, inspire, and activate. After a long 2+ years, we finally hosted a long-awaited in-person Meaningful Travel Summit in Medellín, Colombia, bringing over thirty industry influencers there to experience community-led initiatives, ones that helped transform Medellín from its former place as the world's most violent city to a place of peace and vibrance. They demonstrated how tourism was and continues to be a force for good in that journey.

We value tradition, but we know change is inevitable, so we find new ways to unite, inspire and activate our community. As we enter our twentieth year, we will look to celebrate how we have accomplished just that, recognizing our legacy of volunteer work, mixed in with our amplified mission of creating positive impact around the world, spotlighting social enterprises and local experiences. In joining hands with five NGO partners to form the Future of Tourism Coalition, we are poised to have more tools at our fingertips and more friends to help us meet today's challenges and create a radical focus around guiding principles centered on destination stewardship.

Finally, we continue to embark on our own EBDI (Equity, Belonging, Diversity & Inclusion) journey, understanding it is hard but necessary, and knowing that it is not niche or temporary, but like each sustainability goal, core to our existence.

Thank you for all you do to support Tourism Cares. We hope you enjoy this reflection on 2021 and work with us to make commitments for 2022 and beyond.



Greg Takehara, CEO

# Table of Contents

|                                       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Our Mission                           | 4     |
| Guideposts: The SDGs                  | 5     |
| Program Updates                       | 7-16  |
| Impact by the Numbers                 | 17    |
| Members, Sponsors +<br>Special Thanks | 19-22 |
| Board + Staff                         | 23-24 |
| What's to Come                        | 25    |



# MISSION

Tourism Cares, a 501c3 US nonprofit, is dedicated to the travel industry's long-term survival by advancing its positive social, environmental and economic impact to help people and places thrive.

## Vision

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We believe we can change the world through travel.

## Mission

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Tourism Cares unites the travel industry and is a catalyst of positive social, environmental and economic impact for the people and places of travel.



# GUIDEPOSTS

Each year, Tourism Cares uses the Sustainable Development Goals as a blueprint, tool and resource to guide our portfolio of impact throughout the year.

In 2021, our work directly pointed to these specific goals:



Equity, diversity, and inclusion in tourism was a major focus for Tourism Cares in 2021. Through the establishment of the "Diversity in Tourism Grant Fund" and partnership in the Pathways Program, Tourism Cares has pushed for the industry to be more reflective of the people it serves.



The Future of Tourism Coalition became an official supporting partner of the Glasgow Declaration, showing a commitment to transforming tourism to deliver effective climate action. Rebalancing our relationship with nature is critical to regenerating both our ecological health and our personal, social, and economic well-being. It is also critical for tourism, which relies on and connects us with flourishing ecosystems



By introducing more than 30 travel professionals to sustainable tourism opportunities in the country of Colombia through the Meaningful Travel Summit, Tourism Cares was able to show how a country with a challenging history can create more stability, opportunity, and peace through tourism.



To learn more, visit [www.tourism4sdgs.org](http://www.tourism4sdgs.org)

# PROGRAM UPDATES



Caption: A tourist purchases flowers from a local business in Colombia.



# Building a Map

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In the Spring of 2021, Tourism Cares created the Meaningful Travel Map of North America as a way to help members meet consumer demands for more sustainable travel product.

The Meaningful Travel Map highlights authentic, community-led experiences, products, and tours across North America. It is a business-to-business tool, meant to connect travel professionals to mission-based organizations that are, or could be, involved in the tourism value chain. The Map is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and is primarily focused on small businesses, nonprofits and social enterprises that provide a positive impact to their communities.



In 2021, more than 70 organizations were added to the Map, with sites from Puerto Rico to Oregon, Massachusetts to L.A and everywhere in between.

In addition to the Meaningful Travel Map of North America, Tourism Cares partnered with ProColombia in the creation of "The Meaningful Travel Map of Colombia", which launched during the Meaningful Travel Summit in Medellin in November of 2021. The Map features 20 organizations throughout the country, including fifteen in Medellin that Meaningful Travel Summit participants experienced during the event. One such example is Unión Latina, a community project that teaches young people personal growth through dance and hosts visitors to share the culture of the neighborhood and learn a few dance moves from local youth.

To visit the maps, go to  
[www.tourismcares.org/meaningful-map](http://www.tourismcares.org/meaningful-map)



Caption: A tourist captures a musical performance on their phone while on tour.

# Map Partners

Here are just some of the more than 70 organizations that joined the Tourism Cares community in 2021.

## Canada (5)



### Adventures Without Limits

AWL is a nonprofit organization in the Portland metro area serving people with disabilities through inclusive programming and access to the outdoors.



### Slow Food Lake Tahoe

Connecting their community and volunteers to good, clean and fair food by inspiring a self-reliant food culture. Slow Food educates about growing, preparing and accessing local and sustainable food.



### Coral Restoration Foundation

CRF is actively restoring coral reefs on a massive scale, educating others on the importance of our oceans, and using science to further coral research and coral reef monitoring techniques. Volunteers can dive with CRF to assist in their coral farms.



### Black Owned Market

The Black-Owned Market Edmonton is a volunteer collective whose aim is to uplift, support and build Black owned businesses, entrepreneurs, creatives and community organizations in Edmonton using innovative platforms to make community connections.



### Deep Blue Eco Tours

At Deep Blue Eco Tours in Oahu, their mission is to give people an experience of a lifetime on the ocean. They strive to share our ocean experiences, and the moments with the wildlife that we encounter in a respectful, safe, and educational manner.



### Isla Caribe

Isla Caribe is a cultural tourism social enterprise creating and promoting local experiences in the southern part of Puerto Rico. Isla Caribe seeks to advance sustainable tourism and revive communities in areas that have tourism potential in Puerto Rico.





# Expanding our Platform

Central to the mission of Tourism Cares is the education of the travel industry around practical applications of best practices in sustainable tourism. Introduced in 2020, The Meaningful Travel Platform was created to cover topics and provide implementation strategies to tackle some of the most challenging issues in our industry. From animal welfare in tourism to human-trafficking in our value chains, to climate action planning, this Platform is a clearing house for training, tools and resources in our industry to be proactive in providing more meaningful ways to do business.

In 2021, four modules were added, including the “Questions for Tour Creators” module, a checklist that enacts lasting change in how we do business when making decisions about our travel product. Questions focus on what types of positive impacts we can make by adapting who we choose to work with and what we choose to include in our supply chain.

Additionally, three modules introduced explore practical applications of all 17 of the UN SDGs, explain their interaction with travel and give examples of travel-related organizations that are acting to advance each one.



Since inception, Tourism Cares has provided training and learning opportunities for more than 1,200 travel professionals.

To learn more about organizations furthering the work of the SDGs, and to take the training, visit

[www.meaningfultravelplatform.org](http://www.meaningfultravelplatform.org)



Caption: A child looks through binoculars during a tour.



# Uniting in Colombia

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In November 2021, more than 30 tour operators, travel media and select suppliers including airlines, insurance providers and more, spent four days experiencing unique offerings in Medellín, Colombia to inspire them to integrate local social enterprises and impact experiences into their product. Tour operators who attended are planning to integrate one or more social enterprise experiences in their itineraries and two are starting to offer tours in Colombia for the first time. New multi-sector partnerships were formed, strong market connections were made for the community leaders who participated, and because of the Summit, over 200 new potential tourism enterprises were identified and are now working with ProColombia to become part of the sustainable tourism offering in the country.

Fredy Asprilla, Cofounder of Afrotour, one of the social enterprises included in the Tourism Cares with Colombia Meaningful Travel Summit, reflects on the immediate impact the event's delegation brought to his organization and community:

"It was very pertinent for the moment that the city, and especially community, are going through. It allowed us to continue moving towards the construction of a new economy and continue strengthening our experiences with people who have more than 50 years of experience in the tourism industry.

The mere opportunity to interact with experts in the sector gives us a perspective of how and where we should continue to move forward with our venture, and above all to take note of the things we are doing well. It also prepares us for what is coming, which is very fast growth [for Colombia], so this event gave us the tools for this stage of new challenges. We are happy that we were able to show all the participants our territory."



Watch the event video

Caption: Fredy Asprilla of Afrotour in Medellín interacts with tourists

# Colombia Spotlight:

We asked our attendees and partners to reflect on their experience with the Tourism Cares with Colombia Meaningful Travel Summit. Here is a first-hand account of what they thought:

## **What did you learn in Colombia that will help to support your business priorities and growth over the next year?**

The importance partnerships have in producing meaningful change. I will continue to look for experiences and people who are making a difference in their respective communities so we can continue to "Make Travel Matter".

- Anand Nachtajler, Director, Travel Experiences, The Travel Corporation

## **What positive outcomes resulted for your company as a result of being involved in the Summit?**

The Meaningful Travel Summit has been key for our trajectory as a leading social business in the tourism sector. We could build strong and meaningful connections with potential commercial partners, and the fact that they were able to experience this kind of offer firsthand, makes this relationship closer and with high trust levels. The feedback we received from all the participants was incredibly helpful. We have finessed our experiences, which has resulted in very positive business results for us and the social enterprises. Working as a team with Tourism Cares, ProColombia, and all the social enterprises was an invaluable learning experience that galvanized a multilateral commitment to make sustainable tourism a top priority for the development of the private and public sectors, and from the community level.

- Rodrigo Atuesta, Founder, Impulse Travel

## **What positive outcomes are the result of hosting the Meaningful Travel Summit?**

Working with Tourism Cares and the tour operators and social enterprises of Colombia has contributed to the scope of our sustainability actions and the projection of Colombia in its commitment to a better industry. Being one of around 12 countries in the world with a National Tourism Policy focused on Sustainability and having been invited by TC to be among the founding signatories of the Future of Tourism Coalition, the MTS is a key engine to continue growing the effort led by Tourism Cares and Colombia in the Americas.

- Maria Jose Abuabara Brulhart, Director of Tourism, ProColombia USA



# Offsetting + Sustainable Events

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With a continued commitment to reducing our negative impacts, Tourism Cares once again offset all of our emissions – both from our home offices and as part of our in-person programs. With the support of our Coalition partner, Sustainable Travel International, we tracked staff travel including commuting, business travel (ground transportation, hotel stays and flights), as well as event outputs associated with travel.



In 2021, Tourism Cares offset

**12.92**

metric tons

Staff Travel

**47.88**

metric tons

Colombia Event

Here is just one of the projects that benefit from offsetting with Sustainable Travel International:

## TROCANO ARARETAMA CONSERVATION PROJECT

Located along the Madeira River, the project is protecting a vast area of the Brazilian Amazon that is under imminent threat of deforestation. By improving living conditions and strengthening environmental monitoring and awareness, this project will conserve this critical ecosystem while improving quality of life for local communities.

**Additionally, the Tourism Cares team went to extra lengths to improve responsible practices at our own events, this year in Medellín, Colombia. Here's what we accomplished:**

- Supported 12 social enterprises and community businesses
- Purchased more than 140 meals from local restaurants
- Provided accurate counts to avoid over-ordering and reduce food waste
- Ensured every meal included some form of a sustainable check mark (low carbon or provided by a local organization)
- Limited "give-aways" and chose local suppliers
- Limited on-site brochures, sending most communication digitally in advance
- Required attendees to bring their own water bottles and supplies
- Prioritized venues with a cultural or historic significance to the local community
- Chose a locally owned hotel
- Offset all attendee travel
- 90% of all speakers from sessions represented local voices



# New Member Opportunities

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In 2021, much of Tourism Cares' work revolved around radical collaboration, understanding that our only path forward as an industry is one united in common purpose. We need to work together to achieve our goals. With that, we expanded our membership model to incorporate not only businesses but individuals as well.

Individuals who join through the Tourism Cares Professional Membership program have committed to sharing in a collective effort to use tourism as a force for good. From its introduction in May of 2021, Tourism Cares expanded its community by more than 80 individuals.

Special thanks to John and Mary Stachnik, who on Giving Tuesday, matched a donation for every member that joined Tourism Cares.



This year also marked the launch of our Sustainability Help Desk, or SHeD, 1:1 personalized appointments that offer members the opportunity to connect directly with Tourism Cares. In this judgment-free space, our community can talk through their personal and professional sustainability journey and how to align best practices with their business goals.

The first round of SHeD conversations centered on launching a sustainability plan and how to identify which of the UN's Sustainability Goals are most important to member companies, how to prioritize sustainability within business operations, and carbon offsetting.

[To learn more, visit \[tourismcares.org/member-community\]\(https://tourismcares.org/member-community\)](https://tourismcares.org/member-community)



Caption: A woman plants a tree during a volunteer event.



# Centering "EBDI" in our work

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Tourism Cares remains committed to our Equity, Belonging, Diversity and Inclusion (EBDI) journey, and we encourage our community to do the work with us. In 2021, to support the industry in increasing representation and equity within our own businesses, we developed the Diversity in Tourism Grant Fund, committing funding to two projects thus far:

**Black Tourism Talent Directory** | Our inaugural Diversity in Tourism grantee, The Black Tourism Talent Directory (BTTD), developed by the National Blacks in Travel and Tourism Collaborative is an online platform created to level the playing field for Blacks in travel and tourism as a matchmaking tool for small Black and Brown travel and tourism businesses, professionals and students to access businesses, employment, internships, speaker and media opportunities in travel and tourism.

**Pathways Project** | Founded in partnership with TreadRight, TRIP School, USTOA, and the Media Arts Institute of Alabama, The Pathways Project aims to increase the representation of Black, Indigenous, and other historically underrepresented individuals in travel and tourism, with a focus on integrating program participants into roles in the guided tour space. The program actively recruits communities underrepresented by the industry and selected applicants will be provided with online learning, active mentorship, and an in-person training boot camp.

[🔗 Learn more at \[tourismpathways.com\]\(https://tourismpathways.com\)](https://tourismpathways.com)



Caption: Travelers explore a map when choosing tour options.



# Taking Climate Action




In June 2020, Tourism Cares became one of six co-founders of the Future of Tourism Coalition (FOTC). Since its inception, the FOTC community has grown to include more than 650 signatories, representing the entire breadth and scope of the travel and tourism industry.

In 2021, much of the Coalition's work focused on the climate emergency, asking its signatories to take action.

**Signing on to the Glasgow Declaration** | The Future of Tourism Coalition became an official supporting partner of the Declaration, showing a commitment to transforming tourism to deliver effective climate action. Rebalancing our relationship with nature is critical to regenerating both our ecological health and our personal, social, and economic well-being. It is also critical for tourism, which relies on and connects us with flourishing ecosystems. Restoring nature - and our relationship with it - will be key to our sector's recovery from the pandemic, as well as its future prosperity and resilience. Learn more at [www.futureoftourism.org](http://www.futureoftourism.org)

To further the work and create a community to fuel change, the Coalition launched its **Community Platform** where Coalition signatories can actively join forces around the future of our industry and the health of destinations. The platform hosts interactive boards to pose questions, post resources, interesting articles and events and creates direct connections to other signatories dedicated to the future of travel. By creating a global community, the hope is to problem-solve and challenge each other to drive action.

 Join us at [futureoftourism.org](http://futureoftourism.org)



Caption: A diver explores a deep cavern. The Future of Tourism Logo sits next to the diver.



# Impact awards to global grantees

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Foundational to the work of Tourism Cares is its grant work, supplying funding to tourism-related entities around the globe.

In 2021, Tourism Cares provided \$112,000 in funding to the following organizations:

- Cultural Heritage Economic Alliance, Inc | for support of the Black Travel Talent Directory
- Friends of the Environment, Abaco, Bahamas | for Hurricane Dorian recovery
- FRIENDS International, Inc. | for vocational training project in Myanmar
- Media Arts Institute | for support of the Pathways Project
- Three Square Foodbank, Nevada | as part of the IPW fundraising event
- Lindblad Island Conservation Fund | for the Galapagos Island Relief Fund
- Collective Impulse | for capacity-building for Colombia Meaningful Map
- TripSchool LLC | for Pathways Program
- National Civil Rights Museum | for guide training program
- Vital Ground Foundation | for grizzly bear protection initiative

**Lindblad Supports the Galapagos** | Tourism Cares supported the people of the Galapagos Islands through a campaign led by Lindblad Expeditions, donating \$10,000 to the fund.

The people of Galápagos, where 80% of the economy depends on tourism, were plunged into crisis when COVID-19 abruptly halted travel in March 2020. A year later, the slow and protracted recovery left families, businesses and the community at large struggling with profound and sustained hardship.

To learn more, visit  
[tourismcares.org/  
support-a-grant](https://tourismcares.org/support-a-grant)



Caption: A Grizzly Bear explores a nearby stream.



# By the Numbers

**ONE**  
united global industry, using travel as a force for good.

**20** Major association partners.

**80** New individual members.

**170** Member companies.

**44.5%** Increase in social media reach over the year.

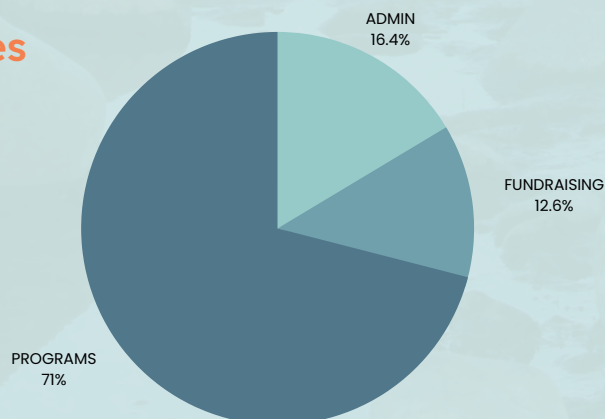
**260,000** Travel professionals reached through media and trade partnerships annually.

**90** Social enterprises and non-profits connected to the tourism industry.

**\$112,000** Awarded in grants around the world.

## Where Your Money Goes

We prioritize exceeding non-profit standards, working to ensure as much funding as possible goes directly to programs that serve the people and places of travel. 2021 continued to be a difficult year but one of growth, as we began to see some recovery from the (lasting) pandemic.



# OUR COMMUNITY



Caption: A tourist interacts with a local provider during the Meaningful Travel Summit in Medellín.

# MEMBERS 2021

## Strategic Partners



## Strategic Association Partners



## Association Partners



# MEMBERS 2021

## Chairman's Circle



## Basic Members

Abercrombie & Kent, USA  
Academic Travel Abroad  
Accor International Hotels  
ADARA Media  
Air Tahiti Nui  
Airsides Mobile  
Alaska Airlines  
Anakonda Amazon Cruises  
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Explore Ashville  
Fareportal  
Finn Partners  
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Four Seasons Hotels  
Galvante  
Global Sustainable Tourism Council  
Goway Travel  
Greater Boston CVB  
HospitableMe  
Hostelling International USA  
Intrepid Travel  
Kartagener Associates, Inc.  
Laurent Perrier, US  
Like a Local Tours  
Lindblad Expeditions  
MAST Travel Network  
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Railbookers  
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Travel Document Systems  
Travel Leaders Group  
VBT Bicycling and Walking Vacations  
Viking  
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Visit Sacramento  
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Whispering Pines Lodge

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# SPECIAL THANKS

It takes a village. Thank you to all of the supporters, volunteers, sponsors and special friends who dedicated their time and effort to helping move the mission of Tourism Cares forward in 2021.

## 2021 Sponsors

Delta Air Lines  
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Collette  
Eric Friedheim Foundation  
Bob Whitley Memorial Fund  
ProColombia  
IMPULSE Travel  
National Tour Association (NTA)  
Travel Insurance Advisors, LLC  
TRIP Foundation

City of Medellín  
USTOA  
Aon  
U.S. Travel Association  
International Association of Travel Agents Network (IATAN)  
Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board  
Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Delaware North  
Broadway Inbound  
Santa Monica Travel & Tourism  
Peek

## 2021 Special Thanks

Josephine Rohrer  
Lauren Eimers  
Stephanie Beckwith  
John and Mary Stachnik  
Nikki Padilla  
Gen Lawrence  
John Sage  
Amy Jukes  
Breanne Joyce  
Derek Hydon  
Rochelle Turner  
The entire FOTC team  
Roni Weiss + the Travel Unity Team

Dawn Pettus + the NTA crew  
Peggy Murphy + the USTOA team  
Adrienne Lee  
Geoff Dion  
Kristi Marsh  
Logan Harris  
Katie Biggers  
Jonathan, Jenn and the TravPro team  
Rodrigo, Majo, Juan, Dani, Camilo, Vanessa, Cata,  
Maria Paula, Lizeth, Maria Jose, Malia + the entire  
ProColombia and Impulse teams - THANK YOU!

and to our many Association partners who help to spread the message of Tourism Cares, thank you for always amplifying our work and being an extension of the TC team.

If we left you off this list, please know that Tourism Cares would not exist without the volunteer support of people like you. We are so fortunate to have so many who care and support us each year. Thank you again!



# Board 2021

## Board of Directors

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Co-owner, Tauck World Discovery

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Terry Dale, President  
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Jim Magrath, General Manager, Specialty Sales,  
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Shannon Stowell, CEO,  
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Arnie Weissmann, Editor-in-Chief,  
Travel Weekly | Executive Vice President, Editorial Director  
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## Non-Board Committee Members

### Programs:

Renee Couey, VP Client Experience, Trip Mate | Patricia Rothman, Sr. Marketing Manager, Digital/Travel, The Auto Club Group

### Marketing:

Timothy Chan, Consultant | Elliott Ferguson, President & CEO, Destination DC | Cathleen Johnson, Cathleen Johnson Tourism Consultants, LLC | Gary Leopold, retired ISM/Connelly Partners; currently, Founding Partner, Prism Advisory Group

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Partnerships - USA, Allianz Partners

### Finance:

Bob Colucci, EVP & CFO, Collette

# Staff

Greg Takehara, CEO  
greg.takehara@tourismcares.org

---

Paula Vlamings, Chief Impact Officer  
paula.vlamings@tourismcares.org

---

Jessica Flores, Chief Experience Officer  
jessica.flores@tourismcares.org

---

Karrie Hysten, Director of Finance + Operations  
karrie.hysten@tourismcares.org

---

John Sutherland, Director of Community Impact  
john.sutherland@tourismcares.org

---

Kati Hagedorn, Assoc Director of Programs + Events  
kati.hagedorn@tourismcares.org

---

Lauren Tilton, Community Engagement Manager  
lauren.tilton@tourismcares.org

---

Katy Butler, Marketing Manager  
katy.butler@tourismcares.org

---

Kristina Rocks, Programs + Events Coordinator  
kristina.rocks@tourismcares.org

Tourism Cares  
95 Washington St, #104-114  
Canton, MA USA 02021  
+1.781.821.5990



## **Tourism Cares with Victoria, Meaningful Travel Summit | September 28 – 30, 2022**

During Tourism Cares with Victoria, we will meet in a destination dependent on Indigenous lands, healthy marine life, and wild green spaces. Through facilitated education sessions, visits to meaningful travel experiences, and volunteering, attendees will learn from environmental and Indigenous groups to discuss how we can be better destination stewards for all to thrive. [tourismcares.org/victoria-summit](https://tourismcares.org/victoria-summit)

## **Inaugural Future of Tourism Coalition Event | September 29, 2022**

The Collaborative Climate Action in Tourism event, held in Athens, Greece, will bring together destinations, communities, and the travel industry to work towards a plan for climate resilience and mitigation. Visit [www.futureoftourism.org](http://www.futureoftourism.org) for more details.

## **2022 Fall SHeD Appointments**

Make sure to register for your September appointment! Visit [tourismcares.org/programs/sustainability-help-desk](https://tourismcares.org/programs/sustainability-help-desk)

## **Tourism Cares 20th Anniversary – 2023**

Next year marks our 20th year since our inaugural event on Ellis Island in New York City! We will be celebrating big, stay tuned for details.

## **Tourism Cares with Norway, Meaningful Travel Summit | April 2023**

The Meaningful Travel Summit with Norway will focus on working with the tourism industry to distribute the economic benefits of tourism across the country, as well as exploring the challenges and opportunities of being a leader in sustainable travel. [tourismcares.org/norway-summit](https://tourismcares.org/norway-summit)

# Tourism Cares

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**2021**



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