INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES:
THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF GIRL GUIDES AND GIRL SCOUTS (WAGGGS)

The international experiences on offer to girls when they become a Girl Guide or Girl Scout is one of the key drivers for girls joining the Movement.

From attending our flagship leadership seminars to enabling girls to speak on a global platform, our ambition at WAGGGS is to reach ever more girls with the promise of adventure, diversity and new friendships.
Across the world, our 10 MILLION MEMBERS IN 150 COUNTRIES create a truly global network of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, united in creating a better world for girls and young women.

By harnessing these international connections, we can give our young members access to the world, enabling them to make new friendships, develop new ideas, learn about other cultures, and inspire them to be leaders both within the Movement and wider society.

The range of international experiences that we offer to our Member Organisations is one of the key attractions to those thinking of joining the Girl Guide Movement – 88% of volunteers tell us that they joined Guiding because it was international.

As the world’s largest voluntary organisation for girls and young women, our international reach, and the opportunities that it offers our members, is at the heart of all we do.

“I love meeting Guides and Scouts from all over the world and seeing the diversity in the Movement. That’s something I love about being a Girl Scout: I get to meet so many different people and realise even though we have so many differences, they are not nearly as important as the thing we have in common: enthusiasm about the environment, leadership change and Guiding and Scouting.”

Helen Storrow Seminar participant 2019.

INTRODUCTION

THE WAGGGS INTERNATIONAL OFFER:

The WAGGGS international offer refers to everything that WAGGGS does to bring members from two or more countries together, either physically or virtually, with intent to deliver one or more of the following outcomes:

- supporting Member Organisations to deliver growth through addressing the demand for international adventure;
- facilitating opportunities for WAGGGS to showcase its unique value-add to Member Organisations through making global connections and helping shape the world for girls and young women; and
- providing a space to inspire, develop and engage with a new generation of progressive global leadership committed to growing the Movement.

WHAT INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES DO WE OFFER?

Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting is a diverse global Movement brought together by common values. There is a shared sense of belonging and optimism that together we can make the world a better place.

To harness this connection and to bring people from across the Movement together, WAGGGS offers a range of international experiences including exchange visits, mentoring schemes, and social media networks:

- **THE FIVE WORLD CENTRES** – Kusafiri, Sangam, Pax Lodge, Our Chalet, and Nuestra Cabana - offer an international hub for Girl Guides and Girls Scouts to attend events, learn about different cultures, and make new friends whilst having an adventure.

- **GLOBAL GUIDING CONFERENCES**, including Regional Conferences and the World Conference every triennium.

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3 WAGGGS Membership Services Working Group, May 2017
• **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT** through events like the Helen Storrow Seminar and the Juliette Low Seminar, with innovative blended learning opportunities such as pop-up seminars

• **FORUM EVENTS**: highly participatory and innovative networking and learning events with face to face and virtual participation

• **REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS** and blended learning for adult members and decision makers to share good practice

• **OUR CUTTING-EDGE WORK ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS** with www.thegoals.org, which brings together young people from different countries to share their experiences and learning

• **OUR GLOBAL ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS** where girls’ voices are heard on issues that affect them, and our access to global advocacy platforms like the UN General Assembly and Commission on the Status of Women

• **GLOBAL MOMENTS LIKE ‘WORLD THINKING DAY’**, during which WAGGGS provides programmes to connect the international Movement and celebrate a day of international friendship

• **INTERNATIONAL CAMPS** – large scale events for young people coming from different parts of the world to live together and learn

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**EXTENDING OUR REACH:**

At WAGGGS we aim to make activities inclusive, available for girls and young women wherever they are in the world and regardless of their economic and social circumstances.

In recent years we have been exploring how we can harness technological innovation to extend the reach of our flagship international leadership events, so many more girls can benefit from the seminars and develop their leadership skills.

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**HELEN STORROW SEMINAR: POPPING UP ALL OVER THE WORLD**

The Helen Storrow seminar is a seven-day environmental leadership programme that has been held at Our Chalet, our World Centre in the Swiss Alps, since 1986. It inspires young women to bring positive change to the natural world by:

1. Developing their leadership practice
2. Learning about the environment
3. Planning a community-based environment project – seeing the change, leading the change, making the change, and sharing the change.

In 2017, we piloted a new model that focused on extending the reach of the programme to Member Organisations around the world so that more young women could participate in the seminar without having to travel to Switzerland. This new approach allows us to double, or even triple the reach to young women through pop-up seminars.

The pop-up events are designed to have as much as possible the same look and feel for girls as those attending in person. Sessions were streamed directly from Our Chalet and Member Organisations connect together to share learnings and experiences on different aspects of the course.

“I love WAGGGS initiatives. Every programme increases my confidence. Helen Storrow pop-up seminars made me think about the environment and gave me the chance of planning to take action to save the environment.”

HSS pop-up participant 2018
OUR IMPACT:

In 2017, 562 participants took part from 21 countries and in 2018 we extended our reach even further, engaging 650 young women from 31 different countries across all five regions.

Those attending via the pop-up sessions also added a wild component to really help girls benefit from the adventure that international experiences bring – Girl Guides in Syria went hiking and camping in a forest.

In 2019 we had eight pop-up seminars (Australia, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Sangam, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, USA) which lasted between half a day and six days and connected between one and eight times to other seminars. Feedback from the 2019 event showed that:

- **100%** of those taking part in pop-ups think WAGGGS should use the pop-up model for events in the future.
- **100%** of Our Chalet participants felt inspired to be more active in their Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting Association;
- **100%** of Our Chalet participants will be doing a community action project after the seminar.

What participants told us they valued most about the experience was making new friends and hearing about the experience of others all over the world. It would not have been possible to open participants up to such diversity and variety of connections without the technology that enables us to connect participants.

“**I got to meet people from places of the world I didn’t even realise existed. Also, with all the news and stereotypes going around the world it’s hard not to fall into the trap but experiences like these truly moves you to expand your horizons and not just look at things on the surface, there’s always another side to every story.**”

HSS Participant.

JULIETTE LOW SEMINAR 2019:

**IT IS AN INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP EVENT THAT HAS TWO PARTS;**

The Juliette Low Seminar (JLS) has been running every three years since 1932.

1. Participants attend an international event for seven days with 40-60 of their peers to learn about leadership, to break down gender barriers, to develop their own leadership practice and create a plan to reach 100 more girls in their local area.

2. Participants use their plan to complete their leadership project once they return home and share their knowledge to make an impact.

For the first time in 2019 WAGGGS applies the same approach as in the Helen Storrow Seminar, offering JLS at multiple hubs, including all World Centres and 15 Member Organisations.

The 2019 target is to reach 1,000 participants across these hubs and create a network around the world to build a shared international experience.

WAGGGS is the largest voluntary movement dedicated to girls and young women in the world with 10 million members across 150 countries. For more information please visit www.wagggs.org or call 00 44 207 794 1181.