International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017

Travellers’ Competition- Jury

Sandra Carvão, Chief of Communications and Publications, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Sandra Carvão is Chief of the Communications and Publications at the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and Spokesperson for the Organization since April 2010.

Between 2007 and 2010, Sandra was Deputy Chief of the UNWTO Market Trends, Competitiveness and Trade in Tourism Services Section. Prior to joining UNWTO in 2003, Sandra was Market Manager at the Portuguese National Tourist Office in Lisbon.

Sandra has a degree in International Relations, Economics Branch, by the Instituto de Ciências Sociais e Políticas/Universidade Técnica de Lisboa and a postgraduate degree in Marketing by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

Sofia Panayiotaki, Director and Head of PR and Communications, PR MEDIACO

To start, Sofia earned a leading role as a broadcast journalist breaking news stories in Japan, Greece and the UK. Working with some of the biggest media outlets in the world, including REUTERS, BBC and NHK to name a few, Sofia managed her position both in front and behind the camera for over a decade. During this time, she also coordinated the international broadcasting of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games in HD.

From there, Sofia set up NEEDEDaFIXER using her first-hand knowledge of the media industry. To this day, NEEDEDaFIXER produces more than 300 different films, documentaries, television shows and commercials annually.

In addition to her media background, Sofia chaired the European Travel Commission in Asia for three years, overseeing the marketing campaigns of 28 European countries. Afterwards, she spent seven years as the Head of the Greek National Tourism Organisation in Japan and the UK.

Capitalising on her love of travel, Sofia then established PR MEDIACO, a leading UK-based travel PR and communications agency specialising in destination branding and marketing.

Educated in the universities of Athens (Greece), Leuven (Belgium) and Nagoya (Japan), Sofia holds a Master’s Degree on International Development.

John Telfer, Product Director, Explore Worldwide

John has been in the adventure travel industry for over 30 years, starting as a tour-leader in Turkey and Peru and now as Product Director at Explore overseeing 600 small group itineraries in 120 countries worldwide.

Responsible Travel is key to Explore’s ethos and embedded into every tour— and a significant part of John’s role is making sure that the company practices what it preaches, namely “enriching lives through adventure travel”!

As a Visiting Professor at Surrey University he helps students bridge the gap between pure academic learning and real life experience. A lifelong traveller, he has just returned from revisiting Chernobyl, cycling in Jordan, and a bit of trekking on Mount Athos and Montenegro.