



# OUTWARD BOUND INTERNATIONAL

2019 EDITION

*Journal*

- ▶ Magnetic North
- ▶ The Spirit of Hong Kong
- ▶ Teaching Generation Z
- ▶ Teaching the Instructors
- ▶ Becoming Outward Bound Vietnam



Northern Exposure  
(see page 36)



Is about being able  
to deal with setbacks,  
and **NOT GIVING UP** when  
things get challenging

Increases staff  
retention and  
**'STICKABILITY'**

Is enabled  
by flexible,  
**CREATIVE THINKING**

Involves  
effective  
**LISTENING**

Is about  
**LEARNING  
FROM  
FAILURE**

# RESILIENCE

Is aided  
by **BUILDING  
NETWORKS** and  
relationships

Helps overcome  
short term  
**ADVERSITY**

Enables you to  
**THRIVE**, and  
not merely  
survive

Is vital to  
**SUSTAIN HIGH  
PERFORMANCE**  
over time

Involves  
**MANAGING**  
negative  
emotions

## FROM THE EDITOR



recover from adversity." In the 20th century, the Oxford English Dictionary defined it as "the act of rebounding or springing back."

While it is unclear if Kurt Hahn ever used the term "resilience" in describing his educational ideas, many of his frequently quoted maxims, such as "your disability is your opportunity," are consistent with contemporary definitions of resilience. Its meaning is also exemplified in one of the guiding principles he introduced at the Salem school in 1920s Germany: "make the children meet with triumph and defeat." To this day, the idea of resilience is evident in the discourse around Outward Bound and its intended effects on participants. It has also found its way into our strategic thinking—the January 2019 World Conference theme was "Making Outward Bound schools more effective and resilient."

In this issue of OBI Journal, readers can learn about two figures from OB's early days. Both were practitioners of and experienced with the idea of resilience. The first is Lawrence Holt, the less celebrated of Outward Bound's two co-founders, whose Blue Funnel Shipping Lines suffered such great loss of life during the Second World War that he sought the counsel of Kurt Hahn to help address what he believed was contributing to high mortality among young seamen set adrift in lifeboats: a lack of perseverance and resilience. To learn more about Holt from one of his Blue Funnel Line contemporaries, see "Lawrence Holt" (page 31), reprinted from the Winter 1971 issue of STRIVE, the former flagship publication of Outward Bound in the UK.

The second figure is Marina Ewald, a childhood friend of Hahn's credited with introducing him to the educational use of expeditions at Salem, the boarding school where he served as headmaster until forced to flee Nazi Germany in 1933. In 1925, while at Salem, Ewald, a geographer, conceived of and then led a four-week school trip to Finland, accompanied by a colleague. Hahn, who later described the trip as "a long and hazardous expedition," would later extend the use of expeditions to other educational endeavours, including Outward Bound. To learn about Ewald, see "Unsung Heroines: Celebrating the Woman Behind Outward Bound" (page 18), an article from Outward Bound UK that sets her story against the school's nascent efforts to explore instructor diversity.

Throughout this issue of OBI Journal, readers can find experiences that encourage resilience. On page 20 a group of OB participants sets sail for Taiwan aboard the Spirit of Outward Bound Hong Kong. Two examples of organizational resilience can be found in recent journeys at OB Oman (building three national training centres in four years—page 8) and OB Vietnam (moving through three stages of licensure to become the world's newest Outward Bound school—page 44). Finally, join OB Canada on page 38 during a fundraising expedition to the Magnetic North Pole, where resilience, teamwork, and collaboration were essential not only during the expedition, but beforehand, when OB Australia was invited to join the expedition and the fundraising effort.

The English word "resilience" is old and well-traveled. In its original Latin it meant "to leap" or "spring back". In Middle French it was found in contract law, meaning "to annul" or "return to a previous legal status." When it entered English in the 16th century it carried a similar meaning, but by the 17th century it had become associated with the physical world and connotations like "elasticity" and "bounciness." By the 19th century it began to resemble one of its current psychological definitions: "the capacity to

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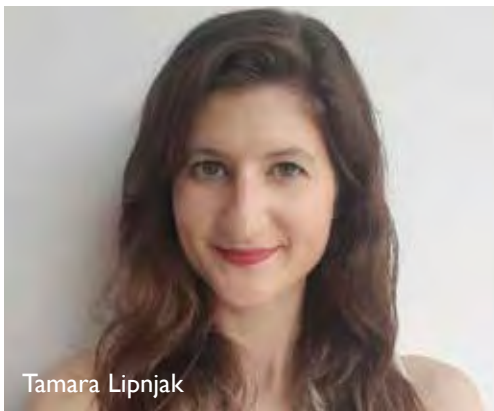


Mark Evans

*Lessons Learnt from Construction, Reflections on the 2019 World Conference*

Mark Evans ([www.markevans.global](http://www.markevans.global)) is the Executive Director of Outward Bound Oman, the first Outward Bound school in the Arab world. He is Patron of the Andrew Croft Memorial Fund ([www.acmf.org.uk](http://www.acmf.org.uk)), and the founder of Connecting Cultures, an educational initiative endorsed by UNESCO that uses the desert wilderness to bring young people together on journeys of intercultural dialogue.

Evans has been travelling in wilderness environments for 40 years, and has, among other things, spent an entire year in small tents on Svalbard, which included four months of total darkness; crossed Greenland in 26 days by parachute and ski, on the trail of Nansen; and kayaked solo the entire 1,700-kilometre coastline of Oman. He is the author of four books. In 2002 he was named a Pioneer of the Nation at Buckingham Palace for his services to the field of youth exploration, and in 2012 was awarded the MBE for his work using expeditions to promote Intercultural Dialogue. In 2016, with Outward Bound Oman colleague Mohamed Al Zadjali, he completed a 49 day, 1,300km crossing of the largest sand desert on earth, the Rub Al Khali, the first time the journey had been attempted in 85 years.



Tamara Lipnjak

*Teaching Generation Z*

Tamara Lipnjak started volunteering at Outward Bound Croatia in the final year of her Masters Program of Pedagogy and Sociology. After graduation, she joined the OBC team and now works on designing, writing, and implementing local and European projects for youth, especially within the Erasmus+ program. Following her interests in outdoor activities and non-formal education, she also contributes to the organization as one of our experienced Outward Bound instructors and Erasmus+ trainers.

*Instructing the Instructors*

Meg Ryan, 29, worked as an instructor at OBNZ for three years before transitioning into her current role as the course design manager. Meg is a passionate kayaker, runner, trumper, and dabbler in a lot of different outdoor pursuits. She and her husband Dave spend most of their free time adventuring around the South Island of New Zealand.

She loves being able to combine her passion for thinking about how things work with her affinity for the outdoors, and translating those experiences to create personal development opportunities for Kiwis.



Meg Ryan

*Camping with Children: a possible, essential and urgent experience!*

Bruno Romano is a Paulistano (born in the state of São Paulo) living in Santa Catarina who dedicates himself to journalism, mountain expeditions, and the coordination of social and sports projects, as well as international group travel.

He is passionate about the outdoors and once played for the Brazilian juvenile rugby team. He graduated with a degree in Social Communications from the Cáspere Líbero Foundation. Trained as an Outward Bound Brazil instructor in the 2019 class, he has experienced the powerful effects of experiential learning and believes in its revealing and contagious essence.



Bruno Romano

Thao Nguyen Thu



Nguyen Thai Duong

*Becoming Outward Bound Vietnam: a Network-Supported Journey*

Thao joined Outward Bound Vietnam in 2015 as a trainee. She has become the first fully qualified Vietnamese lead instructor at Outward Bound Vietnam. With the founding team, she has pioneered the development of each of our operational areas. She is a fantastic role model for all new staff and has a great passion in working with and helping people. Thao likes learning new things and enjoying hiking the gorgeous mountains of Vietnam.

Nguyen Thai Duong, who goes by Anthony, is Client Manager at Outward Bound Vietnam (OBV). He joined the OBV development team in 2011 as an architect before switching to a full-time position in 2015 as an instructor and then operations manager. Anthony realises that working for OBV is a great opportunity to positively impact the lives of young Vietnamese people by helping them gain life-changing experiences through outdoor activities.

He is now steering his career towards marketing and client management, with the aim of making Outward Bound Vietnam a significant contributor to the holistic development of youth in Vietnam.



Mariya Georgieva

*Creating Paddle Ability — a Unique Course for Central Europe*

A passionate outdoor educator born in Bulgaria and currently living in Slovakia, over the past seven years Mariya has worked for OB Romania, Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Slovakia. She works for the international school Leaf Academy in Bratislava and also as an instructor and project coordinator for OB Slovakia. The experience she gained in her years with Outward Bound allowed her to invest time in developing a successful EU grant scheme that enabled OB Slovakia to run a ten-day kayak training course for five European OB schools.

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# CREATING

By Mariya Georgieva

In May 2019, twenty-four participants, five trainers and 12 nationalities from across Europe joined together for ten days of developing kayaking skills and learning new experiential education methods and about each other's cultures in the Heart of Europe — Slovakia.

The Creating Paddle Ability training course was organized by Outward Bound Slovakia and financed through the Visegrad Fund and the European Union scheme Erasmus+, which offers opportunities for learning and development for young people (and beyond!).

This course was a pilot project for Outward Bound Slovakia. It emerged from the need to train facilitators, instructors, youth workers, and volunteers from Central Europe in using water-based activities in experiential education programming and work with youth.

Even though kayaking has a long tradition in Central European countries as both a sport and a recreational activity, its application in outdoor education is gaining traction only recently. The interest in implementing kayaking programs as a platform for personal development is growing. For this reason there is a strong need to develop the professional knowledge and skills of instructors and facilitators to run safe and effective programs.

Creating Paddle Ability was likely the first course in Slovakia to offer an opportunity for its participants to take an American Canoe Association kayaking assessment.

The project included instructors and facilitators from Outward Bound Romania, Outward Bound Croatia, Outward Bound Finland, Outward Bound Slovakia, and Prázdňinová škola Lipnice (Outward Bound Czech Republic), together with Elmenyaka-demia Hungary, and Plusko Slovakia — organizations which offer programs based on experiential education. It is always great to learn from the work of others and so the course created a platform for Outward Bound Schools and non-profit organizations to meet and exchange best practices.

The trainers team was composed of experts from five different countries — Ireland, Croatia, Slovakia, Austria, and Bulgaria. The diversity of backgrounds, nationalities, and cultures created exciting dynamics in the group.

It was a challenging course for both the participants and the trainers. At the time of the course in May, the Danube had risen



# PADDLE ABILITY—

## *a Unique Course for Central Europe*

due to melting snow in the river's upper reaches and with it the level of challenge rose as well. During the expedition, which was a core program element, the participants had the chance to experience the Danube channels under unusual conditions.

The highlight was the half-day experiential program designed and run by the participants for youth from different backgrounds. The participants went "Outward Bound" by implementing their newly acquired skills and knowledge and teaching 20 young people basic paddling skills.

Inspiration is the word that best describes the outcome of this project, both for the participants and trainers, who would like to keep developing in outdoor education, and for the organiza-

tions, which are looking at ways to implement more kayaking and water-based activities in their programming. We are definitely motivated to develop the program further — either by making it happen in another partner country or through developing a second stage. ▶



“

**With further development, the course has a potential to become a benchmark for people who want to get into leading groups on the water.**

”





# LESSONS LEARNT FROM CONSTRUCTION

*of three national training centres in Oman*







## By Mark Evans

Despite the country of Oman facing some of the most challenging economic circumstances in decades due to the decline in oil prices, Outward Bound Oman (OBO) has been able to grow significantly in the past ten years. In the space of four years, from 2016 to 2020, OBO will have built three national training centres—one in the desert, which hosted the 2019 OBI World Conference, one in the capital city of Muscat, and one at 8000 ft on Jebel Akdhar.

Through harnessing the experience of the Outward Bound International network, by being able to demonstrate and communicate the value that Outward Bound adds to the development of the nation, and identifying how it contributes to the specific outcomes of the national strategic plan, OBO has seen funds raised and land gifted. The last of the three centres is due for completion in late 2020, less than two years after the first centre was formally opened.

The construction of Outward Bound centres involves considerable amounts of (in our case) other people's money. To ensure our reputation in the community as a professional and totally transparent organisation prevails, it was vital for OBO that every stage of the project be legally tight and that all processes were managed in a way that they were open to audit, question, and scrutiny at any time.

None of us are experts in construction, so the first tender to be floated is perhaps the most important: appointing the project manager; whose role would be to manage the subsequent appointment and work of the architects (who will design), and then the contractors (who will build). All tenders along this chain end up with a short list of three bids, delivered in sealed envelopes, and opened in the presence of a minimum of three people, including OBO board members and often neutral third parties. A clear, written record of bids and offers is taken at the time of opening, and signed off as witnessed by all present.

For us, the selection of the right project manager, architect, and contractor is crucial; all will work together as a tight team over an 18-month period, with regular meetings and numerous issues to be discussed and often challenged. Our preference when selecting a project manager is to choose the best we can afford. They earn their corn when things get tough and take the strain of the detailed project management to ensure contractors and sub-contractors are delivering, and that timelines are being adhered to. Our preference for both architects and contractors, after undertaking due diligence with regards to capacity and financial stability, is to look for a win-win solution by selecting small- to medium-sized companies for whom the project is meaningful, makes a difference to their portfolio, and ultimately helps them grow. Such companies bring



a passion to the table that larger companies, who work on much bigger budget projects do not—their eye's attention, and A-grade staff, will be focused on the bigger jobs.

Cost control is vital; for us, every rial counts and meetings continually explore opportunities for “value engineering,” the term used for finding an alternative way of doing something, or a cost saving, without a marked drop in quality. As a result of tight project management, our first centre came in nearly \$400,000 US under budget, funding which was carried over to centre number two.

Before getting too excited about building or acquiring a centre, one needs to be aware of the additional costs that will arise once the centre has been built. If the centre is not occupied by groups all the time, do you need a caretaker or security staff, for example? What will the impact of the additional costs of basic services such as water and electricity be on your annual budget? In some OB schools, a great deal of money is consumed by heating; for us the problem is the reverse, but the plentiful solar energy in Oman, coupled with emerging schemes where surplus energy can be sold back into the grid, should enable some of our centres to operate on a cost-neutral basis over the course of a year. Building a reserve into the budget to cover the costs of maintenance that will inevitably increase as the facility matures is also a prudent move.

When it comes to design, all of our centres are different to reflect their surroundings—desert, urban and mountain—but there are common themes that run across all three. Sun, and heat, are our biggest challenges, not rain and cold as in many OB locations. Initial design research always plots shadow areas and sun position, and the resulting plan may contain smaller windows, and thicker walls, to counter the effect of the sun. All centres have been designed with multiple revenue streams and income generation in mind. They not only act as bases for OB courses, but also have the capacity to act as residential field research centres for schools, colleges, and universities, and as unique locations for corporate retreats. They are constructed to be robust, and “military grade” in terms of durability, yet be warm and welcoming in terms of atmosphere. Our experiences with the first centre suggest that it is best to avoid installing high-tech, complicated electrical control systems in remote locations. Maintenance and repair costs by specialists can get quite expensive—better instead to install simpler, manual systems that can be repaired or modified locally, at a more reasonable cost.

The ‘flow’ of arrivals at the centre dictates the layout of the component units, which are essentially the same in both our desert and mountain centres: a mass briefing amphitheatre to welcome a large group, colour-coded learning pods that can sit up to 25 people where the sub-groups can then meet their instructors before



going to the colour-coded kit cage to gather equipment, and then the colour-coded bag drop to store the bags and gear they won't need on expedition. A small AV theatre provides the opportunity to show some short video clips to embed 'why we are here' and to ensure participants understand a little about the surrounding environment that will be their home for the journey that follows. Our OB courses are always out in the field on expedition, sleeping in tents, or under the stars, and participants do not sleep in the centres. Instead they are places to welcome, brief, and set off from, and to reconvene, debrief, and clean up at course end.

Kitchen and food storage facilities enable us to cater to residential groups, who would have the option of sleeping indoors on simple wooden platforms based on an alpine hut design, or on the flat roof under the stars. The ability to self-cater keeps costs down to an affordable level and adds another educationally valuable learning experience to the visit. Two air-conditioned classrooms (inevitably called Hahn and Holt) provide the facility for meetings, or indoor team-building activities.

When planning your new centre, don't forget the local community on the doorstep! Good neighbours are invaluable, but bad ones can be a real thorn in your side. It is worth spending time thinking

about how you can weave and integrate them into the life of the centre, so they see your presence as a positive, and not a negative, thing.

To construct three training centres in four years is quite an achievement, and one that we hope will have a significant impact on education in Oman. My thanks must go to the chairman, Suleiman Al Harthy, and all of the board members of Outward Bound Oman for their wisdom, governance, and oversight throughout this process. As we have grown into a larger and more complex organization, managing concurrent, multimillion dollar construction projects has taken a great deal of everyone's time. Board meetings have become longer as a result, and decisions require greater consideration and carry more weight. Special thanks must be reserved for Hilal Al Mawali, the first chairman of Outward Bound Oman, and now advisor to the board, who has done such a great job in managing and overseeing all of these projects, and more. Hilal now brings those skills to OBI as a member of the nominations and governance sub-committee. 

Notes:

The architectural design consultants for all three Outward Bound centres in Oman were 23 Degrees North ([www.23degreesN.com](http://www.23degreesN.com))

All photographs by Phil Weymouth ([philweymouth.wordpress.com](http://philweymouth.wordpress.com))





# INSTRUCTING THE INSTRUCTORS

By Meg Ryan

*Meg Ryan, current OB Course Design Manager and past OB instructor, shares with us what really goes on during staff training at Outward Bound New Zealand. And you'll be happy to hear that yes, even OB instructors feel challenged!*

"Well I guess we're committed now," muttered one of our 'technical experts' as we rounded the northern tip of D'Urville Island in the outer Sounds.

Our original plan, as part of the annual Outward Bound New Zealand staff training, was to explore the outer Sounds, but as we approached D'Urville Island, the perfect combination of wind and tide times pointed to attempting a full circumnavigation. D'Urville Island isn't for the fainthearted.

French Pass, which separates D'Urville Island from the mainland, has very strong currents and whirlpools. Nonetheless, instructor Finn's fast calculations assured us that there was "just enough time to get around." The combined adventurous spirit of 30 delivery instructors pushed us towards the only possibility. Around we went! A lumpy two metre swell surged over the bow of the launch as the cutter gracefully followed along behind. The sails went up and we all sat in shared anticipation of what this adventure would unveil. No one moved unnecessarily.

As the launch disappeared down a swell, the cutter felt more like a dingy and a lot less seaworthy than the day before. Slowly, we

eased into feeling competent in this new environment. The occasional dumping wave that landed on the deck became friendlier and with each tack we felt more capable and more trusting of the cutter's ability to handle the conditions.

The phrases "type-two fun" and "student empathy" went through my head. In that moment as we entered French Pass, I was uncomfortable. Sea sick, a little cold, wind burnt... and in total disbelief of the incredible mission that was underway. However, I felt an acute connection to myself, the people with me, and the world around me. It was the classic "live in the moment" journey.

And just like that, a day's sailing expedition around D'Urville Island was done.

This experience was the second day of our four-day staff training "hikoi"—Māori for long journey. Our delivery team were evenly split across waka ama and cutters to explore the Queen Charlotte and Pelorus Sounds.

Our hikoi goals were to peer teach, become more competent with our work tools, strengthen our team culture, and connect and engage with parts of our local environment. We aimed to train hard so we would have the capability to strengthen our practise with students.



Every year our delivery team commits to 20 days training across the activities and disciplines we offer at Outward Bound. Last month we spent two weeks upskilling with technical experts from across the industry. Our missions included:

- river rescue and kayaking personal skill development in Murchison with the New Zealand Kayak School
- tikanga Māori training with some incredible people from Te Ātiawa, the local iwi in Marlborough
- staff culture building and facilitation training with well-known facilitators Adam Cooper and Lynda Church
- adapted course training with Matt Truman
- a four-day sailing journey exploring our local area

Alongside our training days, our organisational culture supports the continuation of professional development throughout the year. Coaching support and regular feedback are all part of the job and keeps us focused on delivering the best course experience for our students.

Supporting staff professional development is fundamental to maintaining our long history of facilitating one of the best personal development programs in New Zealand. Working with the needs of people is a forever-changing landscape and one that must be constantly understood. Our staff training aims to ensure we have the required capabilities to keep our students safe while providing a high-quality development experience. Also, we believe it is important to walk the talk.

Outward Bound is in the business of asking people to step away from the comforts of life into a new and challenging environment. Therefore, to ask this of our students, we must continue to do this ourselves.

Our training weeks are run on similar principles to our courses: working together through difficult times, heading on challenging adventures, learning new skills, and learning more about ourselves. Each day is carefully crafted by our training manager Sharon Nicholas to ensure we maximise the time that we have.

I am sure that any past Outward Bound student would take great pleasure in observing 30 instructors trying to be organised all at the same time...."

As I sat down on the shore that evening (still rocking slightly) I looked around in full contentment.

Today I was at work, getting paid to train and learn with a bunch of passionate and inspiring individuals. I am incredibly grateful to work for an organisation that invests in a professional training program to constantly develop our capabilities. 🏡





AN EXPERIENCE OF A  
**LIFETIME**

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Having spent 25 years at Outward Bound Singapore, Nicholas Conceicao, 52, is one of the longest-serving members of its staff. Having joined Outward Bound Singapore—or OBS, as the school is affectionately known to pretty much everyone in Singapore—as an instructor in 1993, he has risen up the ranks to become its Executive Director.

Over the years, Nicholas has seen OBS transformed from a little-known “adventure camp” to a modern Outward Bound school that is the envy of many in the Outward Bound fraternity. He has been part of its evolution to meet the emerging needs of Singapore youth, expanded its programmes to enable more people to have the Outward Bound experience, and helped upgrade its staff with the specialist skills and deep expertise to run new programmes and share their knowledge to help the outdoor industry grow.

Ironically, however, he knew nothing of the organisation before joining it.

“I did not have the opportunity to attend any OBS course during my schooling years, as you had to be an outstanding student leader in those days to be selected,” he said. “My parents did not see the value of me spending too much time on school co-curricular activities, so it was straight home for me after school.”

Nicholas’ first exposure to outdoor sports came when he learnt to swim at the age of 17 and took a life-saving course. It sparked a keen interest in water sports, which eventually led him to pick up windsurfing and become a freelance windsurfing instructor. Through teaching people from all walks of life, he discovered the joy of guiding and nurturing people to conquer their fear of the water and to enjoy the open sea.

So when he graduated with an economics degree, while most of his peers aspired for a lucrative career with a private bank or stockbroking firm, Nicholas found himself drawn to a job advertisement for OBS instructors. It said: “Looking for passionate individuals keen on a career as outdoor instructors.”

“It piqued my interest,” he recalled. “Although I knew little of the job, it seemed a good deal for a fresh graduate like myself who didn’t want to be desk-bound—a job in the outdoors with a graduate salary.”

So he sent in an application—his only one—and signed up for the next instructor selection camp, which he passed with flying colours. (Much later, he was told that he had, in fact, been ranked the top candidate during the selection camp.)

It was an interesting time to be at OBS, as the outdoor adventure school was in a period of transition, having been moved from under the charge of the Ministry of Defence to the People’s Association (PA) in 1991. Its Director, Mr. Winston Lim, a former Colonel from the Singapore Armed Forces, was going all out to reshape, rebrand, and renew the school.

This, said Nicholas, was no easy task. “In the early years when OBS first returned to the PA, OBS had earned the unenviable reputation of being a tough boot camp run by the army,” he said. “During our outreach to schools and corporate organisations to expand our programmes, there was apprehension that OBS was too physical for their training needs.”

Frequent roadshows, however, helped to showcase OBS’ efforts to refresh its training approach, while programmes held for school principals, physical education teachers, and corporate managers gave them a taste of the modern educational pedagogy and training methods that OBS programmes had adapted for use. “It took us several years to change that image of OBS,” he said, “for OBS to become recognised as a national institution for adventure learning.”

Throughout this journey, Nicholas found himself growing in tandem with OBS.

“I was indeed fortunate to have joined OBS when it was undergoing its transformation to a modern Outward Bound centre,” he said. “As I matured and gained experience in the organisation, I was continuously entrusted with enlarged leadership responsibilities that challenged me professionally.”

“

**I reminded them that this was what Outward Bound was... to venture into the unknown and push ourselves beyond our self-imposed limits.**

“

Indeed, over the years, Nicholas has taken on a wide variety of roles within OBS, which not only gave him a view of many aspects of the running of the school, but also gave him the confidence to take on increasingly important responsibilities. When he was promoted to Head of Overseas Youth Programmes (OYP) in 1995, he learnt to oversee the development and operations of OBS programmes at Outward Bound schools in the region. Then, as Assistant Director of Training, he handled the selection and training of instructors and oversaw the Programmes Development and Overseas Youth Programmes units, as well as supervising day-to-day operations.

He can still remember the “defining moment” when someone was needed to fill this post.

“None of us among the junior section heads had the confidence to step up to the job,” he recalled, “so Mr. Lim gave us an ultimatum: ‘One of you will have to step up to the task as this role is not for an outsider; we need someone who understands Outward Bound!’ As he looked across the room at all of us, Mr. Lim asked, ‘Nick, will you give it a shot?’”

Remembering what the heart of OBS was—pushing one’s limits, taking on challenges, and being Outward Bound—Nicholas said yes. Later, he added on experience in strategic as well as operational roles, as Deputy Director (Training and Operations) and General Manager (Operations Management) respectively. In June 2006, Nicholas was appointed Director of OBS—the first Director to come from within the ranks of the instructor cadre.

Nicholas paid tribute to the predecessors who gave him the guidance and mentorship to undertake his various postings at OBS, as well as the peers and subordinates who supported him with a combined strength and collective wisdom.

"As we achieved many successful milestones over the years, it was the collective wisdom and support of the team that gave me confidence to push the boundaries of what we do at OBS," he said. "I always made it a point to challenge everyone in the team to achieve their fullest potential and to find the best person for the job."

Some of the most satisfying moments of his career at OBS came from his early years as an instructor. As an instructor, he explained, he had the opportunity to impact participants directly and witness first-hand how OBS transformed them and helped them discover their inner strengths and become more confident.

"On the last day of the course, aboard the ferry boat out to Pungol Point jetty, I would observe many of my participants looking at their hard-earned OBS certificate in their hand and often, I would see some of them with tears in their eyes," he said. "You know that you made a difference when they tell you they don't want to go home; they want the course to continue."

As Executive Director, Nicholas also counts two significant milestones in OBS history as among his proudest moments. One was when OBS made both Olympic and Outward Bound history by hosting the Singapore Youth Olympic Games (YOG) Island Adventure segment of its culture and education programmes in 2010, the first time an Outward Bound school was included in an Olympic training programme for athletes. The other was when OBS sailed its cutter from the school's home island, Pulau Ubin, to Lumut, Malaysia, the hometown of Outward Bound Malaysia, and back, to mark its 45th anniversary in 2012. The 1,200-kilometre expedition pushed staff far out of their comfort zones, as they had to sail in unfamiliar waters for 11 days. "I remember that when I mooted the idea to mount the expedition within a two-and-a-half-month time frame, the staff thought I was out of my mind!" recalled Nicholas with a laugh. "I reminded them that this was what Outward Bound was... to venture into the unknown and push ourselves beyond our self-imposed limits."

Both the YOG Camp and the Singa-Lumut expedition, he added, exemplified the OBS can-do spirit. "The most important lesson I have learnt is that as a leader, you have to create the means and conditions for everyone in the team to share and contribute to the organisation vision; that everyone's talents and strengths have a part to play in achieving success," he said. In the same way, he added, OBS has imbued him with the same can-do spirit to dream big and to stay on course, no matter how daunting the setbacks. "When I first joined OBS, my parents kept asking me, 'When are you going to get a real job?'" he recalled. At the time, he confessed, he too had not expected to stay beyond a few years.

But, he added, he has since seen himself realising his full career potential and aspirations. "I'm privileged to have been entrusted with many opportunities to undertake leadership on several important projects within OBS, the PA, and now, the National Youth Council and the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth."

After years of serving as a member of the Operations and Risk Management committees of Outward Bound International (OBI),

Nicholas recently accepted a nomination as chair of the Operations Committee, which plays a key role in advising the OBI Board on implementation of strategic initiatives as well as promoting closer collaboration between schools. "I'm very privileged to have a great team of OB school executive directors on-board," he said, "and together we'll strive to build on what our predecessors have achieved."

Apart from his OBI committee service, Nicholas also served for 12 years on the school advisory committee of Singapore's Republic Polytechnic, contributing to its School of Health and Leisure. He has also had many opportunities to hone his leadership and strategic thinking skills through projects, such as chairing the PA's 50th anniversary celebrations committee, curating the Youth Corps training curriculum, and steering the conceptualisation of the building of OBS' new campus on Coney Island in the north-east of Singapore.

Nicholas' journey is best reflected in an especially memorable expedition in Hong Kong in 1994. He led a group of Ngee Ann Polytechnic students on an Overseas Youth Programme, in which they took on a challenging 18-day expedition that included sailing a brigantine tall-ship called Ji-Fung (*Spirit of Resolution*) from Hong Kong to Luzon Island in the Philippines, trekking overland, and sea-kayaking to rural villages. Crossing the South China Sea to the Philippines, he said, was "a life-changing experience", as the crew were engulfed in the tail end of a passing typhoon. But this experience gave the team the seamanship skills, confidence, and teamwork to take over running the ship on the return journey to Hong Kong.

"For me, the experience aboard the Ji-Fung has been etched in my mind as the epitome of venturing Outward Bound," he said. "The uncertainty of leaving safe harbour for the open sea, overcoming physical and mental challenges in the face of adversity, and the feeling of triumph when we completed our journey, are indescribable."

Nicholas is thus confident about OBS' future, especially on the vital part it will play in Singapore's National Outdoor Adventure Education Master Plan, which will send all Secondary 3 students (ages 14 to 15) to OBS, and the OBS@Coney project.

"Today, OBS is a household name that is familiar to most Singaporeans," he said. "In contrast with our early years when some people were apprehensive about attending OBS, many parents today regard OBS as an important rite of passage for their children that is not to be missed."

Nicholas' own vision is for every person who attends OBS to exemplify its motto, "To serve, to strive and not to yield". "Every OBS instructor will send off his or her watch with the same message: that after completing their OBS course, it is just the beginning of their real Outward Bound journey," he said. "I hope that with the confidence and mental fortitude gained, every participant can play a leading role as an active citizen to contribute to Singapore." ▶

Readers interested in learning more about OBS are invited to download the book "Making Waves, Changing Lives—50 Years of Outward Bound Singapore": <http://bit.ly/OBS50book>



# OUTWARD BOUND COSTA RICA *NAMED TOP GAP YEAR PROVIDER*

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Outward Bound Costa Rica was named Top Gap Year Provider of 2018 by GoAbroad.com, a US-based international education website and travel resource.

The idea of a gap year traces its beginnings to the post-World War II United Kingdom and began to take shape in the UK and elsewhere beginning in the 1970s. The idea, then as now, is a months-long, self-directed opportunity for reflection and personal development that is taken prior to entering tertiary or post-secondary education.

While not yet a universal phenomenon, taking a gap year is increasingly popular in many of the countries where OB operates.

Several OB schools offer gap year experiences, including, of course, OB Costa Rica, which offers gap year and semester courses for high school graduates aged 17 and older.

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

# UNSUNG HEROINES:

## CELEBRATING THE WOMAN BEHIND OUTWARD BOUND

By Victoria Cooper and Kate O'Brien

Earlier this year at Outward Bound UK, we celebrated International Women's Day through our communications by highlighting the role women have played in the story and heritage of Outward Bound.

At Outward Bound in the UK, 20 percent of our instructional staff are female. This mightn't sound so high, but it's pretty representative when put in the broader context of outdoor industry demographics within the UK. For example, of all those individuals qualified with a Mountaineering Instructor Award (MIA) in the UK, only 10 percent are women and of all those qualified with a British Canoeing-UKCC LEVEL 2, only 26 percent are women.

In the last issue of the OBI Journal we shared our research and findings on the project we're currently undertaking to explore our instructor diversity, and initial findings show that women are significantly under-represented across the board.

There have been some really impressive women in the news of late in the UK — British fell runner Jasmin Paris recently broke the Spine Race record (a race widely regarded as one of the world's toughest endurance races) and won the race outright. Jenny Graham set the record for the fastest woman to cycle around the world. And in our staff team in the UK we've also got a wealth of talent, including the first person to solo kayak the 2,700 kilometre trip around Britain and Ireland. What's more, their presence is such that you'd never believe they only made up 20 percent!

Of course, countless others slip under the radar unnoticed.

We felt there was no better opportunity than International Women's Day

2019 to shout about one particularly amazing but little-known outdoorswoman, who should be very close to our hearts here at Outward Bound — Marina Ewald. But who exactly was she?

Anyone who thinks they know the history of Outward Bound but hasn't heard of Marina Ewald, should think again. It seems surprising that, given her founding role in the origin story of experiential learning, she isn't a household name. Or maybe it doesn't — after all, we're still fighting #BalanceforBetter 95 years after some of her defining contributions.

Marina was a childhood friend of Kurt Hahn, the co-founder of the original Outward Bound Sea School in Aberdovey in 1941 whose story is generally more widely known and acknowledged within Outward Bound. Hahn was an educationalist who also founded the Salem School in Germany in 1920 and the Gordonstoun School in Scotland in 1934. At both of these schools, expeditions played a prominent role in the education of the students. Both Hahn and Ewald were proponents of the Lietz Country Boarding Schools, founded between 1898 and 1904 and based on a new philosophy of education oriented towards sociological principles — principles that both Hahn and Ewald took forward in their work.

Ewald was a teacher at the Salem School from its inception and became director of Spetzgart, an expansion of Salem, in 1929. Hahn described Ewald as "a co-founder of Salem. She was a partner in all the major decisions — an educator in her own right... Her contribution is held in high regard."

One of Ewald's most notable gifts to the future of Outward Bound came in 1925. Along with another teacher from Salem, she took 20 students on a four-week expedition to Finland. The idea for the expedition came from Ewald. She was the leader and only woman on the trip, which was a long and hazardous one. It





involved travelling by steamer to Finland, and from there buying barges that could be tied together. The trip started on Lake Saimaa and involved travelling overland by truck and then putting the boats back onto the water on Lake Päijänne and sailing down to Lahti in the south. The party camped on remote islands and lived partly by hunting and fishing.

This expedition marked a key turning point in Kurt Hahn's pedagogical approach. Ewald herself understood the profound impact it had both on the students and on future educational programmes, describing it as:

"... like a voyage of discovery. For all the participants it was one of the happiest experiences of those years. Because of its success, Kurt Hahn therefore attached the greatest importance to expeditions carefully planned beforehand and carried out with endurance. They have become an essential part of his educational programme."

The success of the Finnish expedition was a key factor behind Hahn's adoption of strenuous expeditions as an essential part of his educational philosophy. It is perhaps curious, given Hahn's focus on the development of character in young men as opposed to women, that he didn't publicly revere Ewald for possessing what might well have been perceived as a quite extraordinary spirit.

Hahn was Jewish, and his fierce public opposition to the Nazi regime meant he was forced to leave Germany in 1933 and move to Britain. Ewald kept in touch with Hahn and visited him until the outbreak of World War II. Ewald continued to be the driving force at Salem during this time, but in the years of the Nazi regime the school went through the most difficult period in its history.


In 1941 the Nazis took control of the school and eventually shut it down in July of 1945. However, just a few months later, Ewald reopened the school free from Nazi influence. Salem was able to pick up where it left off, and thanks to her leadership, the school is still thriving today.

So there you have it. The next time you find yourself talking about the history of outdoor education and the inception of the "Outward-Bound style expedition" (and let's face it, there's no better dinnertime conversation), you should probably include that the first trip was led by a woman named Marina Ewald. Of those closest to Hahn who had a strong influence on the development of outdoor experiential learning, we're not sure any can match Marina in having such a defining role. And by the way: all the others were men.



But the fact that Marina's story is so little known is, sadly, not a shock. It is a fact that worldwide and in many different industries, including outdoor education, the contribution of women is still to be fully recognised and promoted.

Fortunately, there is some great stuff going on in the UK and, we're sure, across the globe. Sport England's #ThisGirlCan nationwide campaign has been getting women moving since 2015 — and they've just launched their latest initiative, Fit Got Real! Last year, OBUK joined forces with The North Face as part of their #SheMovesMountains campaign which celebrates a new generation of female explorers. As part of this, The North Face pledged to make changes within their company, starting with equal representation of women in all marketing and content. They continue to support us in 2019, helping more young women aged 13 to 19 to take part in summer adventures with Outward Bound (in the UK).

We think these campaigns are brilliant, but we always want more. More equality. Less bias. That's why we're working hard to understand the (lack of) diversity within our instructor team, and the broader challenges that females face within the outdoor industry in the UK more broadly. 

# THE SPIRIT OF HONG KONG:

## OUTWARD BOUND FOR TAIWAN

By Geoff Evans

We sped into the darkness towards Hong Kong with a track of wonderful green luminous algae behind us. The wind was topping 38 knots and *Spirit of Outward Bound HK* was surfing majestically down six meter waves. The sound of the wind was occasionally drowned out by the roar of the ocean as Spirit's speed crept up to over 12 knots. The yacht seemed happy to be back doing what she does best, sailing oceans safely and providing a safe platform for us

to enjoy the thrill and excitement that nature's table provides. Nine days earlier, a group of strangers met at Outward Bound Hong Kong and were welcomed on board Spirit, their home for the next week or more. After an initial safety briefing, the group were left to settle into their new environment. Sleeping on board was an option but most chose to stay ashore in the dormitory accommodation provided. The following day was dedicated to safety training and sea survival. Everyone was given the opportunity to swim up to an inflated life raft and get inside, and to experience





setting off fire extinguishers and distress flares. As with all our activities, safety is our prime consideration; we hope for the best but train for the worst. By the end of the day everyone was more aware and there was an air of excitement and anticipation of what adventures lay ahead. I am sure that few slept well that night with minds buzzing.

Early next day the crew set lines, prepared food, and got ready to leave the safety of shore to sail towards Taiwan. Engine on, lines let go, Spirit gently edged her way forward and headed out to sea. The wind was a little light for this round-the-world racing yacht, but Spirit performed well and this gave the crew a little time to acclimatize to their new environment.

As we reached open sea, the motion of the ocean caused occasional *mal de mer* but that soon passed. Two days later, after an uneventful passage, Taiwan lay stretched before us. Immigration formalities complete, the crew disembarked to various hotels to enjoy a well-deserved shower and dinner on a plate that wasn't sliding across the table.

Taiwan—what a wonderful place! The food was delicious, the people so welcoming, and the scenery delightful. We could have spent much longer there but our departure date was fixed. New crew arrived, were briefed, and off we went. The return trip was fantastic—great winds, fast sailing, an adrenaline-filled roller coaster ride, fast and furious. We had allowed three days for the return leg but conditions were near perfect and we were well on track to only take one and a half days. Unfortunately, with just over one hundred miles left to run, the wind died, our speed decreased, and we had no choice but to start the engine and motor back home.

The crews, who arrived as strangers, left as friends. They had shared an experience that was unique and belonged only to them. No one could deny their achievement and no one could take away the memories. Thank you to all the crews of sailing yacht Spirit. Thank you for being brave and adventurous enough to take on this challenge, for stepping into the arena and for achieving something great. Well done and fair winds. 🏴‍☠️





# TEACHING GENERATION Z:

FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS GENERATION TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN STEPPING INTO THE CLASSROOM



By Tamara Lipnjak

In this article, we are going to discuss what's important to be aware of about students who belong to Generation Z and how you can adapt your teaching methods to their needs and learning styles to reach better learning outcomes.

Since our first course in 2005, a generational shift has happened, and we at Outward Bound Croatia have understood that we need to adapt our courses and methodology of teaching to the actual needs of today's participants. To do so we need to be aware of the challenges this generation faces, as well as what motivates them and what they value. But first, let us introduce them.

## Who exactly belongs to Generation Z?

Although there are different notions of when Generation Z first appeared, generally it is understood to be formed by individuals born around 2000 onwards. Generation Z succeeds the infamous Millennial generation and is today either in school or entering university.

The change of generations can be identified by the different behaviours, values, and attitudes they demonstrate to separate themselves from the older generations, and which results from the specific experiences they share and the conditions they grew up in.

Much is yet to be researched and written about Generation Z. What we present in this post are the five characteristics we've identified as most influential on their learning and important for educators to be aware of.

## 1) Generation Z are digital natives

As opposed to all previous generations, members of Generation Z were born into a digital, ever-connected world.

While everyone born before 2000 — the “digital immigrants” — has witnessed the digital revolution and experienced the need to constantly learn and adapt to the digitalization of more and more areas of life, members of Generation Z have never experienced a world without the Internet, which presents a constantly available source of information and communication tools.

Generation Z's way of social interaction is, naturally, greatly influenced by technology, but they are also very aware and critical of it, especially about social media. Generation Z, as opposed to the previous generations, also communicates more visually, via videos, pictures, emojis, and GIFs.

What's important to note is that members of Generation Z are not just consuming online media. According to Tim Elmore, a Generation Z expert and best-selling author, they are also engaged



in creating digital content themselves as a way of expressing their creativity and making their first entrepreneurial steps. They are also aware of the benefits of non-formal online education, which is both cheaper and more moldable to their needs than traditional higher-education paths.

## 2) Generation Z is environmentally conscious

... and have a strong wish to positively impact the world with their work. They are aware of the already visible consequences of climate change and that they will be the ones most affected by it in the future.

Generation Z cares about alternative energy, pollution reduction, environmental conservation, recycling, and impact of the products they purchase on the environment.

## 3) Generation Z students do have a shorter attention span than any previous generation

... but also the ability to multitask and scan text for the information they're looking for, which is a positive consequence of the use of online media. As Tracy Francis and Fernanda Hoefel of McKinsey & Company state, members of Generation Z are excellent at "collecting and cross-referencing many sources of information and with integrating virtual and offline experiences."

However, it is evident that Generation Z students have difficulties concentrating on a particular task for a longer period of time, especially when it comes to reading longer and more demanding texts, solving complex problems, or reaching long-term goals.

## 4) Generation Z students want to know the use of what they're learning

Since they are used to having constant access to information, they are pragmatic and analytical but also ready to question universal truths and are much more open to diversity and inclusion.

Generation Z students are also reported to show a higher interest in entrepreneurship than the previous generation and hope to open up their own businesses or use their hobbies to earn a living. Since they are aware of their access to any information they might need at any given moment, they expect their formal education to be more than just the pure passing-on of information and to teach them practical skills.

## 5) Generation Z students are more cautious than the previous generation

An International Federation of Accountants' survey shows that Generation Z students are more cautious and concerned about their (professional) future than the Millennial generation was. Having grown up in times of recession, what they consider the most important public policy priorities are the stability of the national economy, the quality of education, and the availability of jobs. However, they are reluctant to take over leadership positions.

Comparing them to the Millennial generation, Tim Elmore also states that Generation Z members are more inclined to save money rather than spend it, and that they are more cautious, pragmatic, and less confident due to the apparently more insecure conditions they're growing up with.





### What does that mean for educators?

In order to efficiently communicate with and teach Generation Z students, educators should be aware of the many strengths that this generation shows unprecedentedly and to build on them.

In order not to fall into the trap of believing that everything was better in the past, it's important to stay updated on the scientific research about this generation, as well as open and curious in the interaction with your Generation Z students.

### So what should you be aiming for when teaching Generation Z students?

- **Don't neglect their ability to navigate in a technological world. Incorporate digital technology into your teaching and their assignments. Use online communication channels to stay connected to your students.**

What is important to teach them is how to process the large amount of information that they encounter; how to distinguish the reliability of different online sources, and how to think critically.

- **Pick up on your students' environmental awareness and encourage them to put it into practice.**

For example, you could engage in sustainability-themed interdisciplinary projects with your students. Discuss and practice waste-re-

duction and management, debate food production and food waste, as well as energy-efficiency, with your students and let them become environmental ambassadors in your school.

These topics are also perfect for trying out experiential learning methods with your students. Why not start an urban organic vegetable and herb garden with your class?

- **Help them stay focused.**

Be prepared to break down your lessons into shorter and diverse activities, using different teaching methods to keep them engaged. Assign them problem-solving tasks. Use pictures, videos, graphs, and other visual tools to communicate your lessons' content efficiently to your students.

Set up device-free classes (it's not necessary that all are), include short physical exercises in everyday classes, and take them out of the classroom and into nature whenever possible. Help them stay focused on their goals by teaching them time management and planning skills as well as how to define smaller, achievable steps that lead them to a long-term goal.

- **Put emphasis on the students' self-evaluation.**

Learning to learn is one of the eight key-competences for life-long learning defined by the EU's Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Help Generation Z students develop awareness about their own learning styles and how to look for learning opportunities themselves, both concerning hard and soft skills. Make them understand that non-formal learning also matters and encourage them to take part in online and offline courses.

- **Encourage your students to take risks.**

Provide them with learning opportunities that they won't receive any grades for but which will self-evaluate their learning and results. Try and find opportunities for your students to get out of their comfort zone. Not only will it provide them with the opportunity to develop courage and the ability to assess their skills, but it will also improve the cohesion between classmates and teachers, which will result in more mutual trust.

### How can outdoor education courses benefit Generation Z students?

Outdoor education is particularly important for members of Generation Z and has recently been gaining more visibility and recognition of the wider public. With about 1,500 participants per year; most of whom are aged between 10 and 18, we at Outward Bound Croatia are quite familiar with the quirks as well as all the beautiful sides of Generation Z. This also gives us the daily opportunity to witness all the benefits that youngsters can draw from outdoor education courses.

- During our outdoor courses, the digitally native students are going through a "digital detox"—our courses are technology-free, which has the purpose of letting the participants be more focused on the present moment and engage with their group, the instructors, and the natural environment.



Usually, it is the participants themselves who are the most surprised about how much they enjoyed the time without their smartphones.

After spending several days in nature on an expedition where they need to be almost completely self-sufficient, the course participants come to understand how much impact all of us have on the natural environment. Once they face the amount of waste that they have produced in a single day just by preparing their food and maintaining hygiene, students become additionally motivated to live more sustainably and actively prevent further pollution.

- Our courses are based on experiential learning in nature, which particularly caters to students with a shorter attention span. Experiential learning helps students be more focused since all their senses are being occupied.

During the course, they face real problems which can only be solved working as a group. Courses involve a lot of physical activity, which is a welcomed change to their usual sedentary way of living.

- Our outdoor education courses are specifically designed for participants to develop transferrable skills which they will be able to use in their everyday lives. A lot of focus is put on the development of soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and self-awareness.

Together with the instructors, participants set up a personal action plan for the period following the course, in order to achieve a long-term positive impact on their own lives.

- Outdoor education courses let the participants push their inner boundaries by getting them out of their comfort zone.

With the support of the instructors and the rest of the group, participants learn to trust themselves and others, and to take risks and develop confidence.


## Conclusion

Generation Z students have grown up in a world which significantly differs from the one their parents, educators and even older siblings grew up in.

- a completely digitalized and interconnected world
- a world shaken by environmental catastrophes and climate change
- a world completely globalized but at the same time terrified of global menaces such as terrorism and economic crisis

As with any previous generation, Generation Z has strengths we need to recognize and quirks we need to help them overcome.

Education courses designed for Generation Z students should aim at developing students' critical thinking and media literacy, use problem-solving and experiential learning methods to keep them engaged, and encourage their awareness about the importance of sustainability and put it into practice.

We should encourage them to pursue non-formal education both on- and offline, help them set goals and break them into smaller steps, facilitate the development of the competence of "learning to learn". We should encourage them to take risks and take them to the outdoors to experience all the benefits of nature on young people's development. 



# REFLECTIONS ON THE OUTWARD BOUND INTERNATIONAL WORLD CONFERENCE 2019 SULTANATE OF OMAN



By Mark Evans

Building on the success of the 2014 World Conference in Baad, Austria, and the 2016 World Conference in Hendersonville, North Carolina, the 2019 OBI World Conference in Oman had a focus on “making schools across the network more effective and resilient”.

Whilst it was always going to be a challenge for our small team to organise, Outward Bound Oman (OBO) offered to host the conference as we felt it would be the perfect way to start the celebrations of our 10th year of operations. We also saw it as a unique opportunity to raise awareness of who we are and what we do in the national media and in senior government circles. Dinner events with senior ministers and potential corporate donors were organized prior to the conference, and pre-, mid- and post-conference press releases saw extensive coverage in the national media. A third, and no less important, win for us was to enable the OBO staff to really feel part of a global network. Every single member of staff had a role to play in the organization and logistics of the event, and felt much more connected to the OB family as a result of the experience.

To manage the complexities of administering the event and collecting payment from more than 30 countries and currencies, Eventbrite was chosen as the registration platform, a system that worked well. That, and appointing an intern to project manage and field requests for information, minimized the impact on our operations and enabled us to still deliver youth development courses up to the week before the conference itself. The issue that perhaps consumed most of our time internally was supporting delegates with visa enquiries and procedures.

The pre-conference expedition—an optional desert camping experience for the adventuresome—proved to be a resounding success. As people flew to Oman from around the world, a total of 43 delegates and eight camels were already out in the desert for three days, spending time with the local Bedouin community and experiencing the amazing desert landscape and stars. Sand and dust were removed with a quick swim in a mountain wadi, before the expedition returned to Muscat, the capital city, where the explorers met up with the rest of the delegates at the main conference hotel.



January 15, 2019 saw the start of the conference. An opening address to more than 120 delegates by Outward Bound Oman Patron His Highness Sayyid Faisal bin Turki Al Said, in the presence of the UK Ambassador Hamish Cowell, paved the way for OBI Chairman David Kong and Executive Director Iain Peter to welcome the OB community and outline the conference programme and logistics.

Four hours later the luxury of the Muscat hotel seemed a distant memory. Transferred by coach to the northern end of the Sharqiya desert, delegates had 30 minutes to drop their bags, choose a very basic open-air bed, and get back onto the transport for the final 15-minute journey deeper into the desert to the Outward Bound Oman training centre, where most of the meetings and discussions would take place over the coming 48 hours. A series of provocative statements posted on pinboards around the centre enabled people to quickly get used to the venue layout and got brains nicely warmed up for what was to follow.

For the next few days, an intensive programme of concurrent workshops took place providing the opportunity to share best practice and resources. Regular breaks, interspersed with Omani hospitality, provided the opportunity for valuable, informal networking. A Bedouin coffee shop run by Badr, a member of our staff employed from the local bedouin community, proved to be particularly popular!

Headline outcomes from the conference saw the rolling out of and agreement to two key resources, the OBI Strategic Plan and the booklet "What it Means to be Outward Bound", both the result of considerable thought and time from the board of OBI and the Operations Committee respectively. Beyond those, wide-ranging and productive discussions and presentations took place with regards to making better and more effective use of the network through a variety of means, including regional meetings; the issues associated with delivering corporate training courses; and the importance of relevance and being able to demonstrate impact. It was considered helpful by many schools to create a global OB impact report and the possibility of a research model to gather impact data across the network was discussed, both of which are now being worked on by a research and evaluation sub-committee.

During the conference, Outward Bound Peacebuilding also spoke about their work supporting schools around the network, and ideas were shared for effective fundraising; further workshops emphasized the need for risk management to look beyond the course elements of school operations, the opportunities and pitfalls of various staffing models, and the need for smart business intelligence when formulating



*His Highness Sayyid Faisal bin Turki Al Said, Patron of Outward Bound Oman, formally opens the 2019 OBI World Conference in Muscat.*



strategic plans. This conference was also the first attempt on the part of OBI to invite and involve board chairs, an idea that was well received: a dedicated meeting was held for board chairs, an idea that will be followed up in Brazil in early 2020.

After an intensive few days that included two nights sleeping under the stars, January 17 saw OBI Executive Director Iain Peter summarise the main outcomes prior to dinner in Muscat, bringing the conference to a conclusion.

Several points that were raised and endorsed by many in the post-conference evaluation may be of value to those who host future events. Many delegates cited the noticeably high level of engagement as a direct result of being in a remote location with no mobile or WiFi signal. Also, having multiple locations for workshops and discussions meant having to get up and physically move between sessions, which was something that many seemed to enjoy. One challenge of running concurrent sessions and workshops is that delegates can only be in one place at one time, and so may miss out on other valuable discussions. The process of groups rotating around venues at the end of sessions for a quick summary by presenters helped overcome this, and received very positive feedback. Many also commented on the positive impact of having no alcohol.

As with any conference, the event itself was the culmination of a great deal of hard work by many people, over many months. To this end, thanks must go to the OBI Board; to the Operations Committee who invested considerable time beforehand and who supported the OBO team to meet and greet arrivals; and to those individuals who chaired or presented workshops at the conference itself.

My own thanks go to the staff and board members of Outward Bound Oman for doing such a great job of organizing and hosting the conference, and for showing off the beauty of the landscape and the culture of Oman so well, and also to Whitney Montgomery and his team at Outward Bound North Carolina for sharing what they learned from hosting the 2016 conference. Final words are reserved for the super-talented professional photographer Phil Weymouth ([philweymouth.wordpress.com](http://philweymouth.wordpress.com)) for leaving us with such great memories. Since the conference, Phil has spent time on assignment with Outward Bound Vietnam and is now involved in helping establish Outward Bound in Bahrain.





# OB HONG KONG AND WUHAN COLLEGE SIGN STRATEGIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT

By Nick Cotton

China's growth and development over the past 25 years has been nothing short of remarkable. For example, in the entire 20th century the USA poured 4.5 gigatonnes of concrete to create its cities, highways, bridges, and airports. That figure is put into sharp perspective by the fact that in the three years 2011–2014 a massive 6.6 gigatonnes were poured in China, reflecting the breakneck pace of its economic and social development. Along with this development comes changes in the educational landscape and, after over a decade of searching for the right partner, Outward Bound is set to benefit China's future generations.

On June 17, 2019, Outward Bound Hong Kong signed a "Strategic Co-operation Agreement" with Wuhan College, formalising a relationship which has laid the foundations for Outward Bound China. In a ceremony at Wuhan College that coincided with the graduation of the Class of 2019, representatives committed to working together to provide the funding, logistical support, and expertise that will allow Outward Bound to flourish.

Wuhan College is China's first privately-funded, not for-profit university and is providing a forward-thinking educational approach which includes "whole-person development"—a perfect partner for Outward Bound.

The ceremony was attended by Charles Chen Yidan, Honorary Chairman of the Yidan University Education Foundation. The foundation has supported the project and founded Wuhan College, and Richard Winter (Chairman, Outward Bound Hong Kong) as well as representatives from OBHK, the local government and party, and Wuhan College. The signing ceremony was followed by a speech by Richard Winter outlining the history and philosophy of Outward Bound, and an opportunity for the students and guests to ask questions about the benefits of experiential education.

With a not-for-profit organisation on the verge of being registered with the relevant authorities, the provisional licence which has been approved by Outward Bound International will be signed





and the trainees who have been with Outward Bound Hong Kong for the past year will return to China to deliver the first courses in 2020. Hubei province provides many great opportunities for adventure, whether it be training and orientation sessions on the lakes in Wuhan itself or in the 3000-metre mountains in the west of the province.

Wuhan is a city of around 19.7 million people, of whom over one million are university students. The opportunities for them to benefit from Outward Bound are significant, but it is important to remember that Wuhan is only China's 6th largest city. With an average annual GDP growth of ten percent in the last decade, China has not only the population but also the money to invest in education. Outward Bound in Wuhan is likely to be the beginning of a larger network, a network which began with the signing of this significant agreement. ▶

# STRIVE

Each issue of OBI Journal includes at least one article or image that connects with Outward Bound's past. The article that follows (The Architects—LAWRENCE HOLT) first appeared in the winter 1971 issue of the magazine *Strive*. Published by the Outward Bound Trust in the United Kingdom during the 1960s and 70s, *Strive* is a rich source of historical information.



OUTWARD BOUND

WINTER 1971



# STRIVE

Vol. 1  
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## THE ARCHITECTS

Number Two

*'Duty and service were his watchwords. He led and taught by example. He was a man who saw the job through.'*



# LAWRENCE HOLT

## BRIAN HEATHCOTE

I met Lawrence Holt first on the slopes of the hills behind Kirk Michael in the Isle of Man. It was in early summer, 1914. He was living, under canvas, in a boys' camp for one of the large grammar schools of Liverpool. I learned later that the camp was made possible by his generosity and that there was little he liked better than taking a party of boys walking over the hills or sailing in his boat. Still less did I dream that I was to work with him for almost the next half-century. At his invitation I joined Alfred Holt and Company—The Blue Funnel Line—of which he was a partner, when I was able to leave the Royal Navy in 1919, after World War I.

Lawrence Holt was schooled at Winchester and after a short apprenticeship with the Booth Line he joined the Blue Funnel Line, a company founded by his uncle, Alfred, some 60 years before. At this time Liverpool held a remarkable collection of families who sought to serve their community—Holt, Booth, Rankin, Bibby, Jones—names famous not only in business, but for their work in education and social service. This environment had a profound influence on his subsequent life and work. But in no sense was Holt a 'tycoon'. He was a humble man, diffident, self-effacing and with a shyness which would make him withdraw suddenly into himself. Duty and service were his watchwords. He led and taught by example. When occasion demanded, he used himself unsparingly and spurred all around him to do the same. He was a man who saw the job



through, his own free translation of his Company's motto 'Certum pete finem'. But whenever he could do so, with a clear conscience, he escaped to his loves of the hills and the sea. His knowledge of wild birds was profound. This was his 're-creation'.

He was intensely concerned about people, particularly youth. As a young man he worked in the Domestic Mission, a Unitarian Foundation. His interest in boys' clubs was practical, not only by benefactions but by personal service and by help in difficulties. He served the cause of education by his Chairmanship of the Liverpool Institute High Schools for many years.

He knew the officers and men of the fleet intimately by sailing in their ships whenever possible. He spent a good deal of time around the ships and docks, particularly at weekends, and knew and was known to many of the dockers and repair gangs who serviced the ships.

After World War I, with the eclipse of the sailing ship, whence all Blue Funnel deck officers had been recruited, he became deeply concerned for the quality of future officers and masters. His dream was to have a full-rigged ship, worked as a commercial undertaking, to train sea-going apprentices for the Company. Indeed, plans were already on the drawing board, but the rise in building costs after the war made the proposal impossible. So he set to work to institute a training scheme in his fleet, which ultimately became a model for the industry.

His duty, as he saw it, being to serve his community, he gave himself to the public life of Liverpool. He served a protracted term as Magistrate, City Councillor and Alderman, of Liberal persuasion, and ultimately became Lord Mayor of the city. To all these offices he brought vigour, imagination and hard work. His success stemmed from his wide experience of human problems, and his desire always to help. Before World War I he had been the secretary of the Mer-

seyside Joint Docks Labour Committee, an *ad hoc* body of employers and employed, and he was the inspiration of the Dock Labour Clearing House Scheme in Merseyside in 1912, the first step towards the decasualization of dockers. This early effort laid the foundations of the present National Dock Labour Scheme. When he became Lord Mayor some years later, he set up a thorough-going investigation into the problems of casual labour of all types on Merseyside. The subsequent report paved the way for the removal of the worst aspects of such occupations. He served as Chairman of the Liverpool Employment Committee for eleven years in the early days of the National Health and Unemployment Acts, gaining much insight into their working and helping in their effective administration. Armed with this expert knowledge, he was invited to serve on the Blanesborough Commission on Unemployment Insurance in 1927, followed by his appointment to the Coal Mines Reorganization Commission in 1931.

This then, was the Lawrence Holt, who towards the end of the thirties one day received a letter from Kurt Hahn asking to see him and enclosing some literature about Gordonstoun School. He wrote on the envelope 'I have invited him to dinner. Keep that evening free' and sent it to me. I returned it with the comment 'a pity we didn't meet this man 20 years ago!' At the time neither of us knew anything of Hahn. The evening came and we dined. Hahn talking eloquently. One of his subjects was his great desire to use and develop the human material among the fisher boys of Hopeman and Lossiemouth. Would we consider training them as petty officers after they had spent time in the school as weekly boarders? He spent all the next day with me in the office, and the next weekend I travelled to Gordonstoun. I spent 36 hours of hard work before I went south again. I was turned loose with two of the senior boys to explore the whole system and I met all the staff. I learnt for the first time of the Moray



Badge. Hahn took me to see the boat-builder in Hopeman and I saw some of the boys whom he was anxious to help. For these I promised indentured apprenticeships as officers and reported back to Lawrence Holt, whereupon the Company decided to provide scholarships for selected local boys to attend the school as weekly boarders.

This was the beginning of a close and fruitful association between the two men. Each brought to it complementary qualities; each had common ground in a lifetime of interest in and service to people. In hind sight, the ultimate outcome of their meeting seems inevitable. It was bringing a match to touch-paper.

In 1940, Gordonstoun School was evacuated to Llandinam in Mid-Wales. It was necessary to find a place on the sea coast in which the seamanship activities of the school could be prosecuted, as they were an essential part of the curriculum. Such a place was Aberdovey. The problem was how to get the school's schooner, the *Prince Louis*, safely round the war-wracked seas from the Moray Firth to Cardigan Bay. Holt provided a sail-trained captain and chief officer to bring the ship round with her crew of boys and invoked the good offices of the then Commander-in-Chief, Western Approaches, Admiral Sir Percy Noble, for the necessary facilities and protection. The ship under her own sail and power, came north about through Pentland Firth and between the Hebrides and the Scottish Coast. After an epic voyage she let go anchor in the Menai Straits. Both Holt and Hahn were there to meet her. Moored nearby was H.M.S. *Conway* School Ship of which Lawrence Holt was Chairman of the Governors. He had been invited to the chair some years earlier when the fortunes of this old ship, with her great traditions of sea training, were at their lowest ebb. With his energy, vision and deep concern for sea going youth, Lawrence Holt led her to take her place once again in the van of sea training.

Within days there was another work-

ing diner at Holt's home in Liverpool. Hahn had already run ahead and taken a lease on a house near the quay at Aberdovey to be used as headquarters for the Gordonstoun seamanship work. The talk developed—ideas flowed. There began to emerge something dear to the hearts of both men, to Hahn an opportunity of service to a wider community of youth—the Moray Badge principle extended—to Holt opportunity for his company's seagoing youth, particularly in wartime, to acquire skill in small boat handling for the sake of survival. But the horizon widened, the vision grew. I shared the excitement of watching it grow and I was conscious of attending something like a Pentecost. Before the end of that evening, the first nebulous ideas of the Aberdovey Sea School were born. Even a name for the young infant was canvassed. Lawrence Holt suggested 'Outward Bound'; implying the threshold of life—'Outward Bound' it became.

Events moved swiftly. From the resources of the Blue Funnel, Holt promised master for *Prince Louis*, officers for boatwork, lifeboats equipped for pulling and sailing and some miscellaneous stores. Hahn found the rest from somewhere and seconded one of his masters, Chew, to live for a time at Aberdovey and get things started, and also Zimmerman, that wizard who inspired the most unlikely material to run, jump and throw. Hahn also found Jim Hogan, the first warden, who gave yeoman service. Such was the drive of the two founders that, a fortnight after that working dinner, the first course of the Outward Bound Sea School began.

The courses were filled at first by Gordonstoun and Conway boys, Blue Funnel apprentices and young seamen. But it was not long before news spread; the Services began to take an interest and tentative entries were made for future courses from schools and industry. Continuity from course to course was helped by allowing an overlap of Gordonstoun guardians and Conway cadet



captains to provide leadership for the mixed bunches of youth who made up the courses.

Some other pen must chronicle the subsequent expansion of the Outward Bound idea. For five years, Lawrence Holt persuaded his partners to underwrite the loss on the school and to help with staff and stores. When time and experience were ripe for the development of other Outward Bound schools, the Trust was formed to carry on the work.

When Lawrence Holt retired, his staff, afloat and ashore, gave him, *inter alia*, a library table. On it was inscribed *Certum adepto finem*—'a sure end attained'—'a job seen through.' It summarised his creed, his accomplishment and the affection in which he was held. I know he cherished this, as he cherished his share in the founding of Outward Bound, though its growth and momentum surprised him. And I know too, he cherished dearly the rare Gold Badge of the Outward Bound Sea School presented to him by the Governors. His life and his creed are summed up in its inscription—'To serve, to strive and not to yield.' 0

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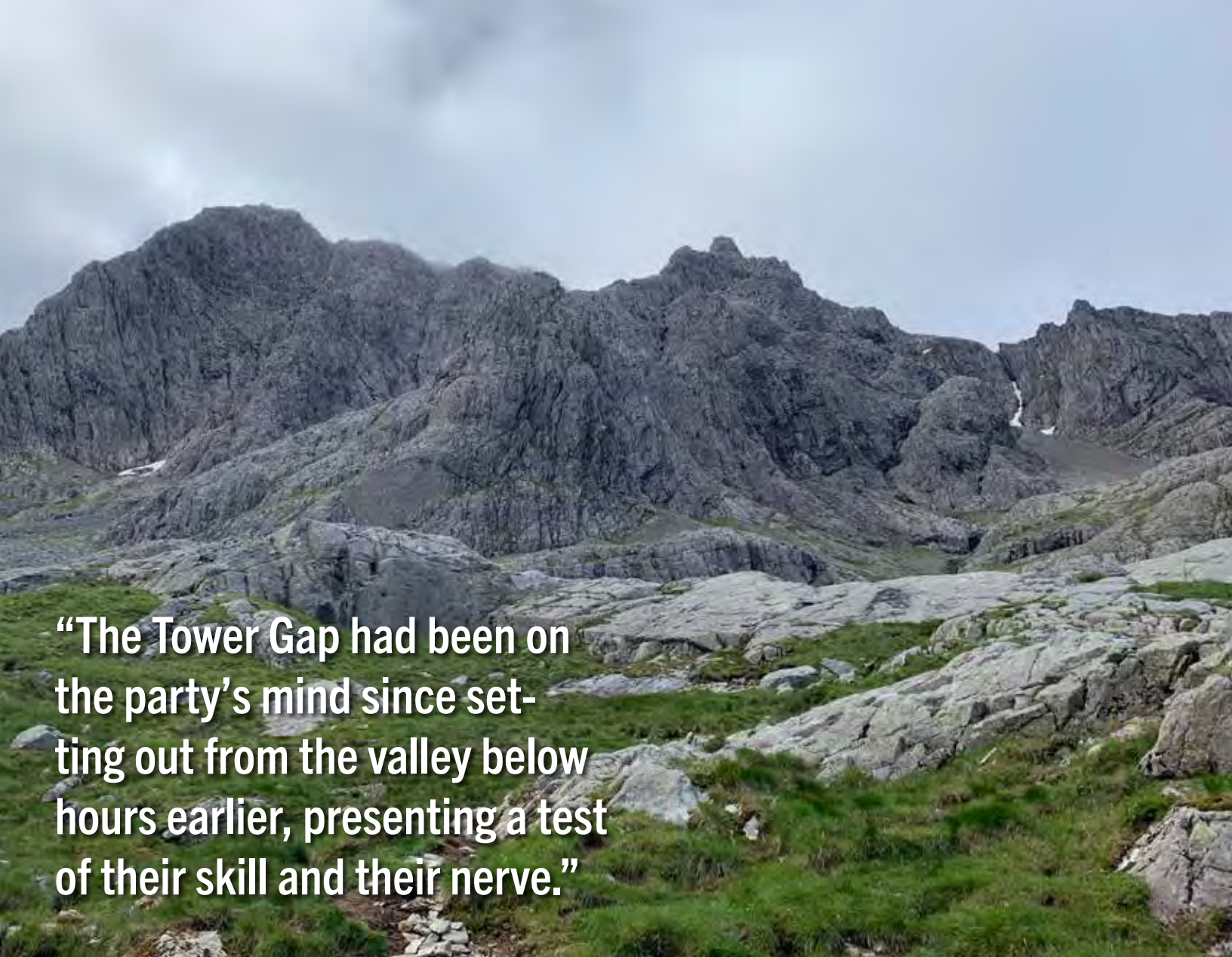
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“The Tower Gap had been on the party’s mind since setting out from the valley below hours earlier, presenting a test of their skill and their nerve.”

# NORTHERN EXPOSURE:

## TOWER RIDGE ON SCOTLAND’S BEN NEVIS

By Nick Cotton

As the group neared the top of the ridge the clouds enveloped the most talked-about element of the day’s challenge, giving it a more sinister appearance than it might otherwise present. The Tower Gap had been on the party’s mind since setting out from the valley below hours earlier, presenting a test of their skill and their nerve.

Since the weekend was not itself an Outward Bound course, the three essential components of any OB experience—People, Place, and Process—were not necessarily at the forefront of the planning. The initial aim was to bring together people from across the global Outward Bound community and present them with an enjoyable

challenge in the company of others who share their passion for Outward Bound. The group was comprised of members from Hong Kong, the USA, and the UK (as well as the guides), all from very different background and ages—the oldest being a sprightly 78! They had nothing in common other than a desire to take on the challenge of Tower Ridge on Scotland’s Ben Nevis in the company of others who supported Outward Bound in their own country.

The place, however, was spectacular. The Tower Ridge on the north side of the mountain provides an achievable mountaineering






challenge that is accessible to all. After trekking through a valley to the Charles Inglis Clarke (CIC) Hut, where they stashed some gear, the group attained the ridge proper, scrambling through impressive terrain and gaining superb views before the clouds crept in. Although the route is not overly technical (graded Difficult in UK climbing grades), the sense of scale is impressive, especially at the challenging Tower Gap. The increased exposure at this point, due to the 'knife-edge' ridge with big drops on either side, added to the challenge of making the step across the Gap. After reaching the summit, a long descent lead back to the CIC Hut for a good night's sleep after a good meal and a cup of tea—or something stronger.

The weekend had been conceived in Hong Kong during the OBI board meetings November 2018, when several people expressed interest in getting to know others from the global Outward Bound community in an enjoyable setting. The administration of the outing was completed by Outward Bound Hong Kong while the local planning and knowledge was handled by Iain Peter of Outward Bound International. The key to success was open and early communication, defined roles in the planning, and a manageable itinerary—a good example of a successful “joint venture”.

The joint planning worked well, playing to the strengths and resources of the two organisations. The resulting experience certainly met the goal of everyone having a memorable time in good company, with one participant commenting afterwards, “The climb itself was exhilarating—with some easy early pitches but progressively becoming more technical, requiring you to work it out and needing more physical effort. .... A truly memorable experience with a great mix of interesting people.”

The opportunities for other schools to set up similar joint ventures clearly exists, with potential for community building and fundraising. With careful planning these ventures have great potential for the OBI network. The secret is to define aims and objectives, to play to the strengths of the collaborating organisations, and to put together a plan that allows for good risk management (safety, funding, reputation, etc.) all well in advance of the project.

It seems that the only element of People, Place, and Process apparently missing from our trip was the process. It was never part of the plan to facilitate learning for our more experienced and mature participants. However, the process of setting the objective and working together to achieve it certainly left an impression on the diverse group, who had, together, achieved something that they almost certainly would not on their own, and returned to their different corners of the world fulfilled, positive, and with new friends. That is very much a part of the Outward Bound process. 

# MAGNETIC NORTH: THE ATTRACTION OF COLLABORATIVE FUNDRAISING

By Sarah Wiley and Tim Medhurst







In the spring of 2019, Outward Bound Canada ran a fundraising expedition to the Magnetic North Pole as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations. This expedition was a great success in terms of providing the participants with a challenging adventure experience in one of the most remote wilderness locations in the world as well as in raising significant funds for OBC. In addition, it had the added benefit of raising funds for Outward Bound Australia. What follows below is an account of what happens when two OB Schools work together for the mutual benefit of both.

Outward Bound Canada (OBC) launched its Reach Beyond Fundraising (RBF) expeditions in 2012 as a means to engage alumni, introduce new individuals “with capacity” to OBC, and raise funds. Prior to then, OBC had run “guest expeditions”. These trips were instrumental in introducing new individuals to the organization and were often used as a means to cultivate new Board members and leadership volunteers to the organization, but were not effective at raising funds. Part of the challenge was the model, since participants were invited to make a donation *after* the expedition. More often than not, that didn't happen!

OBC's Reach Beyond Fundraising expedition model is based on the practice of separating the costs of the expedition from the fundraising component. Participants must commit to covering the expedition tuition cost and, in addition, either raising or



donating the target fundraising amount. OBC sets each participant up with a “peer to peer” fundraising platform that enables them to reach out to their networks, share key messages about the impact of the work that OBC does, and track donations. OBC manages all of the donation recording and receipting, and provides the participant with the tools and support to reach out to their peers.

Since 2012, OBC has run 15 RBF Expeditions involving 107 unique individuals. Of those 107 individuals, one-third were alumni from previous OB experiences, one-third were leadership volunteers or Board and committee members, and one-third were new to OBC. This breakdown accurately mirrors the focus for the RBF Expeditions: to engage alumni, to cultivate and steward leadership volunteers (Board members), and to engage new individuals with capacity to OBC.

How successful have the RBF Expeditions been since we launched them in 2012? Total net funds raised for OBC through the 15 expeditions has been just over one million Canadian dollars. If

one then includes funds generated from individuals who were introduced to OBC through the expedition and have gone on to become major donors for the organization or have opened doors to other funding, the total estimated aggregate amount is closer to \$1.8 million. So, from a fundraising perspective, yes, they have been successful. But more importantly, they have been very successful in providing a path for alumni—who are now at a later stage in life and wanting to reconnect and “give back”—to do so. In addition, RBF trips have been successful in introducing new individuals with capacity and connections to OBC and they have been a great way to cultivate and steward leadership volunteers and Board members. Finally, the “peer to peer” fundraising mechanism raises awareness of OBC, the work we do, the lives we impact, and the individuals we raise funds for. This awareness raising is crucial to our overall fundraising strategy. On a recent RBF Expedition to the Alps, the top overall fundraiser on the expedition had close to 100 individuals and companies donate to OBC, most being new supporters.



OBC's RBF Expeditions started with one expedition in 2012, and now, involve two to four expeditions per year, some in Canada and others in international locations. For trips to international locations such as Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania or Everest Base Camp in Nepal, OBC seeks permission from Outward Bound International (OBI) to run a trip in that region. Preparation in Canada involves a rigorous new program planning process that goes through three levels of scrutiny from a risk management perspective before approval.

To celebrate OBC's 50th anniversary, OBC was planning to run an epic expedition to the Magnetic North Pole (MNP) in the spring of 2019. With such a big ticket item, with a hefty tuition cost and a challenging fundraising target of \$25,000 per individual, OBC was challenged with recruitment. Tim Medhurst, former Executive Director of Outward Bound Australia and current OBI Board member, was keen to join the expedition but there was the challenge of having to fundraise for OBC. Through discussion with John Atkin, Chair of the Outward Bound Australia Board, and in the spirit of true collaboration, Tim joined the expedition as a participant but with the goal of raising funds not for OBC but for OBA. This was beneficial for OBC as Tim's involvement helped to cover OBC's costs to run the expedition, which in this case were substantial; and it was also beneficial for OBA as Tim was able to leverage his participation in this epic adventure to raise significant funds for OBA.

According to Tim Medhurst, "It was a stroke of genius for Sarah Wiley (Executive Director of OBC at the time) to make the offer for me to join the MNP trip and fundraise for OBA. This simple twist on a potential 'problem' for me to fundraise for OBC was a wonderful example of one of Kurt Hahn's apparent favourite sayings of your 'disability is your opportunity'."

This opportunity from OBC was then enhanced by the encouragement and considerable support from OBA's Chair John Atkin. John also saw the opportunity to use the expedition to the MNP organized by OBC, combined with Tim's retirement from the OBA Board, as a catalyst to raise significant funds for OBA.

John and the OBA Board set an ambitious fundraising target of \$250,000 Australian dollars to fund 100 scholarships for disadvantaged young people to attend an OBA program.

The OBA Board focused on Tim's 42 years' of involvement with OBA—from instructor to CEO to Board member—as a reason for folk to







help support OBA. At the time of writing this article, the campaign has raised over \$235,000 Australian dollars. And with a number of pledges to come in before the end of the year, the campaign is expected to exceed the target of \$250,000 Australian dollars.

On April 23, 2019, eight Canadians and one Australian, ranging in age from 25 to 65, started their adventure in the Canadian Arctic after months of training and preparations for the MNP expedition. The team flew to Resolute Bay, the most northerly community in Canada, where they made final preparations before setting out. Two days later, on April 26, the nine members of the team (plus Puppy the “polar bear dog”) was flown in Twin Otter planes 250 kilometres north to their designated drop off point on the sea ice, approximately 100 kilometres from the Magnetic North Pole. What followed was an epic, eight-day polar journey across the ice and over land, the team pulling all of their provisions in sleds weighing 36 kilograms each and sleeping in tents each night on the ice. The 24-hour arctic sunlight couldn’t cut the  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  chill which, coupled with strong winds, could dip below  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

However, as usually happens on Outward Bound expeditions, the team bonded quickly through their collective embrace of the challenge and adversity that the expedition presented them with and through their mutual fascination and appreciation for the incredible beauty of the far north. Seven days later, the team reached their goal of the Magnetic North Pole and one day after that they reached their pick-up spot, the Isachsen weather station, 25 kilometres north of the MNP.

It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all involved, with the bonus of raising significant funds for both OBC and OBA—an endeavour that exemplifies what is possible when Schools truly collaborate for mutual benefit. Hopefully the photos give a taste of the expedition and our story inspires OB Schools to consider more win-win opportunities that can come from collaborating within the OBI family! [▶](#)









# BECOMING OUTWARD BOUND VIETNAM: *a Network-Supported Journey*



**By Nguyen Thai Duong & Thao Nguyen Thu**

Outward Bound Vietnam is the newest fully-licensed member of the Outward Bound community, obtaining an exploratory licence in November 2013, a provisional licence in November 2016, and its full licence at the Outward Bound International Conference in January 2019.

Vietnam is an attractive market for outdoor education. With a population of 95 million, the steadily increasing per capita income, a booming private sector, and the high value that Vietnamese place on education, there are significant opportunities for Outward Bound. In addition, strong industrial growth and expanding foreign investment are generating the need for a variety of workplace skills that are currently in short supply. The economy is growing briskly and sustainably, and the population is increasing by a million people each year.

However, even with all this market potential, establishing a new Outward Bound school has depended heavily on support from the wider network.

Within Vietnam, the Singapore International School system (SIS), with 15 campuses across the country, has the vision to achieve well-rounded education through the integration of a unique outdoor learning program that will see each student attend a week of learning outside the classroom during every school term. With great foresight, they came to realise that due to the expertise needed to operate an outdoor learning program, it was better to bring in a well-established model like the Outward Bound school than to build from scratch.

A pioneering team of volunteers was assembled from this school system, including one of the authors of this article, and they were aided by numerous members of the global Outward Bound





community in pursuit of this goal. It must be emphasised that Outward Bound Vietnam (OBV) would not exist without the strong support from the SIS system and its chairman, Mr. Ricky Tan, including the provision of manpower, office space, vehicles, and financial investment. As we scale up, this school system is already sending students to attend programs for one week each school year from Year Six onwards, providing about six months of steady programming for OBV.

While the authors eventually would form part of the instructional team for the first Outward Bound Vietnam courses, the Vietnamese phrase “*Vạn sự khởi đầu nan*”, it is the first step that is always the hardest, perfectly described the beginnings of Outward Bound Vietnam. In 2011, when the project started, the initial team had little knowledge of the outdoor education industry. In those early days before embarking on the start of this journey, we were not even able to understand much of the jargon and terminology used

in outdoor education. With support from the Singapore International School system, the team was able to visit Methodist Ladies' College in Melbourne, Australia, and Prem Tinsulanonda International School in Chiang Mai, Thailand, who both operate their own outdoor learning centres. In addition, the team visited Outward Bound schools in Hong Kong, Singapore, Canada, Australia, Brunei, and the United Kingdom.

Each of the schools that we visited was very welcoming and encouraging in sharing their particular experience of outdoor learning. It was very interesting to recognise different characteristics among different schools. These depended on the natural environment as well as the cultures and customs of each country and we felt this resulted in different styles of programming across the Outward Bound network. Once the Outward Bound model was decided on, it was still challenging to find a specific model for Outward Bound in Vietnam which would not only reflect the charac-



teristics of Vietnam but would be comparable with other Outward Bound schools around the world. After visiting these other Outward Bound schools, a combined residential and expedition model was developed, and the eventual development of a centre with dormitory capacity of at least 100 beds to cater to five-day school groups, plus access to wilderness areas for expeditions.

Due to the length of the country, separate bases were sought in southern and northern Vietnam, within range of the two key cities, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). This search for permanent sites commenced during the exploratory licencing phase. In the north, an initial site was identified in an area in the hills just outside Hanoi City. At this time Outward Bound International (OBI) began their annual trips to Vietnam to support and advise, which they maintained throughout the licencing journey.

Outward Bound Singapore (OBS) was appointed as a mentor school to OBV, and during the licencing journey, various teams from OBS made several trips to Vietnam, mostly to support in reconnaissance and consultation for on-site feasibility. The mentorship relationship eventually saw over 20 flights made by the pioneering Vietnamese team to visit Singapore to undertake training in various modules and join the extended 21-day Classic Courses.

However this first operational site did not come into being due to land access concerns, and the search for another location then turned to southern Vietnam. After studying many different sites in the southern provinces, in early 2015 OBV was introduced to a coastal location north of Quy Nhon in Binh Dinh province. This site was an excellent option as the city is one of the emerging regions eager for investment, and had been overshadowed by the nearby tourist destinations of Danang and Nha Trang.

The chairman of Binh Dinh People's Committee, Ho Quoc Dung, and his team were invited to visit Outward Bound Singapore, which provided a good understanding of the importance of experiential learning and the Outward Bound philosophy. In July 2015 Outward Bound Vietnam obtained its investment certificate from the People's Committee, and six months later, in February 2016, was granted its land-use right certificate.

With this certificate in place, business registration and education licencing were subsequently completed. The education registration is similar to a school's education licencing, in which a full curriculum is registered and approved by the Department of Education and Training, and is rather unique as OBV focuses on life-skills instead of the conventional academic curriculum.

During the three years of preparing for the provisional licence review, there were periodic visits made by OBI to monitor the progress made, which included development of facilities, people-power, and the extended operational areas. We realized that one key issue was getting qualified people in place. By seeking support from the Outward Bound global community, we were able to identify and employ suitable staff, which was key to our progress.

The mentor school relationship with Singapore was cemented with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding that saw greater engagement. Numerous staff from OBV attended a three-day corporate program and a 25-Day Challenge Course at OBS followed by over two months of skill training in 2015. In March 2016, four more trainee instructors and several others from the SIS network went to OBS for the 21-Day Classic Challenge Course plus skill training.

Beside sending Vietnamese staff overseas for training, it was important to recruit experienced and qualified international staff to build human capacity via the transfer of knowledge. In 2016, two advisors from Outward Bound Australia were engaged to help OBV in its final preparation for the provisional license. We spent two intensive months working together in Binh Dinh, which enabled OBV to establish its fundamental systems and conduct our inaugural pilot course in October 2016 during the review.

For long-term sustainability, it was critical to employ people with broader field experience as we built the capability of our Vietnamese staff. Vietnam is new to outdoor education and we had to rely on employing international staff to be lead instructors and to coach the local team. Since 2015, we have had eight instructors from overseas, primarily from the Outward Bound network, including Australia, Hong Kong, Zimbabwe, USA, Brazil, Malaysia, Slovakia, and Romania, as well as NOLS India, a branch of the USA-based National Outdoor Leadership School.

The diversity that each instructor brought introduced us to various learning viewpoints as we developed and evolved our own programs and systems. This has provided a rich mix of global facilitator resources and course materials, implementation and organisation of activities such as low ropes and Tyrolean traverse, and an array of initiatives and facilitation tools. The international staff are very willing to impart their knowledge and provide constant field mentoring. This method has been a great way to bolster camaraderie and programming quality. We have now improved our depth of technical knowledge, such as in roping activities, and expanded our operational area and scale-up to the current capacity of ten groups per week across two basecamps.

Operational capability is only one component in our journey, however. We also have to build our revenue and meet client expectations in addition to introducing the concept of outdoor education to the Vietnamese. Our growth strategy has been geared towards direct sales rather than through brand awareness and marketing, as this has been more effective and enabled us to build our client base more quickly.

Getting our foot in the door with an initial sales pitch before managing due diligence processes and contracts, let alone course dates and pre-course preparations and briefings, requires extensive institutional knowledge and comprehensive skills, which are key to developing our operational capability. While we have referenced proposals and client packages from other OB schools, we have also embarked on our own series of collaterals which focuses on value-propositions that our programs bring to clients.



Being a pioneer in Vietnam in offering outdoor education and experiential learning is very exciting yet challenging. There are over 100 international schools across the country which are better accustomed to and familiar with these concepts of learning, and organizations such as the International Baccalaureate which require students to participate in a week of outdoor learning each year. Foreign teachers from international schools would also have understanding of and exposure to outdoor learning, particularly Outward Bound programs they would have attended as a participant or as a teacher leading his or her student group. Such avenues have provided initial headway in developing partnerships for OBV. However, the concept of outdoor education and experiential learning certainly remains in its infancy and the use of materials from OBI was very useful to educate the community on this new concept of learning.

For new Outward Bound schools on a licencing journey, we have been advised that a key element is the people needed to support our development. While schools tend to focus on operational delivery, they should also spare their attention to identify revenue streams which are robust and sustainable.

After a three-year licencing journey which included an extensive period of pilot courses at Outward Bound Vietnam @ Binh Dinh province, we received our full operating license at the OB World Conference in Oman in January 2019. Within Vietnam, this achievement was a clear indication that OBV is operating at high safety and learning standards and has helped potential clients feel more comfortable in enrolling with OBV in comparison to other outdoor operators.

There was great support directly from Iain Peter at OBI regarding the governance structure of OBV. This was one of the final hurdles to resolve in our journey towards obtaining a full licence as we made the transition towards an independent Governing Council. Simultaneously, the Risk Management Committee was tasked with overseeing the adoption of a New Program Plan scheme, based on an example from OB Canada, which would allow new activities, areas, and programs to be signed-off autonomously, without the need for future OBI visits.

In hindsight, perhaps the largest recurring challenge has been the growth of capacity to match the growth in participant volume. We have established a localised, structured instructor training program to ensure standards are in place and maintained, with a training syllabus and framework largely informed by the work of OB Hong Kong. We also look to employ experienced international staff in this initial stage to support building our human capability. Staff were intentionally sourced from different countries to help with ongoing training and transfer of knowledge. This has helped build the team and our capacity.

Besides training, OBV has set out to engage with the wider OB community on any possible collaborative opportunities. There remains a strong conviction for field staff to connect and engage with their wider colleagues from other countries. And in this view, OBV is pleased to be hosting the next Asia Regional Staff Symposium in 2020.

Outward Bound Vietnam @ Binh Dinh is a permanent facility that has now been completed near the coastal city of Quy Nhon, which includes a nurse on site, dedicated security guards and CCTV systems, dormitory capacity for 100 people, a dining hall, and a large multi-purpose hall complete with indoor climbing wall and high ropes course, built to international standards.

In the north, operations commenced in 2019 at an interim site in the region of Halong Bay, while a permanent location is sought. A separate team of international staff was recruited to spearhead this development and the interim site has facilities that resemble a mobile program basecamp, with army tents instead of dormitories. However it still maintains other features similar to the permanent base camp in the south and provides an area of dramatic programming.

Through extensive support from the stakeholders and supporters, the Outward Bound movement in Vietnam has established great foundations and is poised for a future trajectory of growth, well into this century. ▶



# CAMPING WITH CHILDREN:





***A POSSIBLE, ESSENTIAL AND  
URGENT EXPERIENCE!***





**By Bruno Romano**

“Nature has the power to make children healthier and happier.” This is how the new guide “Camping with Children” invites families and educators to look more closely at the immense universe of leisure and learning in natural environments.

More than an invitation to camp in a pleasant and safe way, the project encourages solutions to the current routines of children which are increasingly guided into closed and controlled spaces. “This worldwide trend has profound implications for children’s development — and for the future of our planet. After all, if you grow up without interest and love for the natural world, what will mobilize you to try to keep it in the future?” the manual asks.

Improvements in physical and mental health, as well as the development of social, motor, cognitive, and emotional skills of children through contact with nature, have been the focus of many studies in recent years.

Another key motivation for the launch of the guide is the potential for camping activities in natural areas in Brazil, mainly due to the climate and diversity of existing environments in the country. As a society, however, we still need to shrink the huge “empty” space that separates much of the population from our national parks, a universal heritage.

“There is no formula for this, but one thing is true: it needs to involve everyone — caregivers, educators, schools, cities, public authorities,” suggests the guide, with text produced in partnership by

researcher and environmental educator Maria Isabel Amando de Barros and outdoor entrepreneur and educator Flavio Kunreuther, two pioneer Bounders who have been with Outward Bound Brazil since the organization’s first steps.

Two Outward Bound Brazil programs provide journeys designed just for children: OBB Kids and Pais & Filhos (Parents & Children). Continuing the education, the OBB GO! program brings knowledge of activities such as climbing and canoeing to teenagers. The experience of camping ranges from the most noticeable layers, such as exercising autonomy, cooperation, responsibility, listening, and the ability to deal with risks, to deeper aspects, as the guide reinforces:

“To better recognize our possibilities and our limits and realize that it is possible to live and be happy with very little, and so we go one step further in distinguishing the essential from the unnecessary.”

To bring this concept to life, “Camping with Kids” provides clear information on how to start experiencing this world, which places to visit, and what to bring along, with practical safety guidelines, eating tips, and tricks for good planning for minimal environmental impact.

Released this July, the guide also supports the start of the #um-dianoparque campaign, one of the initiatives of the #UnidosCuidamos project launched by the Pro-Nature Conservation Units Coalition, a union of national entities focused on the promotion, knowledge, and appreciation of Brazilian Conservation Units.







The following are some highlights of the guide which can be accessed in full in the guide.

### A MORE ACCOUNT OPTION

"At first glance, camping with children may seem like a big challenge, but it's actually easier than you think... and cheaper too.

... Camping is one of the most affordable, and most fun, family vacation options.

Remember that you do not have to buy all the equipment recommended for the first trips. Talk to friends and relatives and try to borrow everything you can. This will help you test what works best for you and prioritize what actually makes sense to acquire."

### A PACE THAT GENERATES CONNECTION

"Try to set aside time for rest and low-stress activities and tours to make sure everyone feels good. Low expectations and flexible attitude make for a smoother ride.

It is very common for children to be afraid of their experiences in nature. Try to treat this feeling with respect and give it security (for this, it is crucial that you are sure of what you are doing and not beyond your own limits). Gradually, as they are exposed to careful progression, they will gain more confidence and feel increasingly comfortable."

### TRUTH PRESENCE TRUTH

"Few things are as valuable to our children as our real and whole presence. Camping with them is one of the most potent ways to be present: sharing a small tent, cooking and eating together, walking side by side.


What's more, choosing to spend a few days camping reveals to children the value we place on nature and the pleasure we enjoy being outdoors, especially in their company."

### GENERATES TRANSFERS FOR DAILY LIFE

"Camping is a very powerful opportunity to talk about our relationship with the environment we are visiting and all beings living in it — human and non-human — and to practice attitudes of respect and care.

Take this opportunity to educate yourself and the children about the importance of adopting minimal impact practices and conserving places that are the habitat of other species, home to traditional populations, and heritage for all."

### HAVE TRANSFORMING POTENTIAL

"When a child experiences challenging situations in the company of adults he or she trusts, and who are there to show that it is possible to overcome them with care, skill, and respect for nature, they will be much better equipped to deal with similar situations in the environment of the future." 

# ADVENTURE LEARNING FOR MENTAL HEALTH:

*How to Break the Cycle of Disadvantage and Have Fun Outdoors*





Mental health, homelessness, disadvantage.... The for-purpose sector takes on some intractable challenges. The problems we grapple with are not going to go away on their own, and if anything they are getting worse. We have to consider whether the way we have always done things is the best way. Doing something different, in a different place, can help break a cycle, change a conversation, change a mindset, even change a life.

The application of adventure learning to solve social issues is innovative, daring, and effective. It offers an inspiring “place apart”, unforgettable challenges, and the joy of achieving the previously unthinkable.

## WHAT IS ADVENTURE LEARNING?

Adventure learning (or experiential learning, or outdoor education) is authentic learning through purposeful and intense experiences with real consequences and powerful, positive, and memorable outcomes.

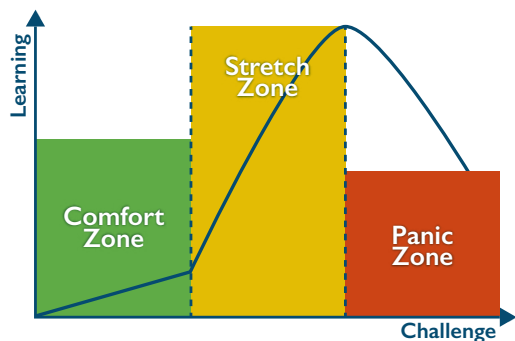
It typically takes the form of relatively short experiences (days or weeks) that challenge people, and through which they discover and unleash their potential and learn that they are capable of more than they had thought they were.

From the outside, these experiences look like physically demanding and exciting activities — climbing, abseiling, hiking, rafting, biking, etc. But in a framework such as Outward Bound's, these activities are just a means to an end. These activities (and other more low-key ones) are presented in a way designed to help people to understand, to learn, and to grow, and debriefing is an important part of the process.

Much adventure learning takes place through schools (“outdoor education”), as children and teenagers test boundaries, experience new things, and learn about themselves.

In the for-purpose sector, adventure learning programs are typically delivered in partnership with other not-for-profit organisations and are designed to address particular issues and achieve particular outcomes. Partners use adventure learning within case management or other existing structures to break a cycle and achieve those outcomes.

For example, Outward Bound works with disability organisations that use adventure learning to help their teenage clients to build confidence, agency, and independence as they move from the protective environments of home and school to the adult world. We also work with youth agencies that want to help young people who are at risk, to develop resilience and problem-solving abilities, and to support future healthy decision making.



## ENVIRONMENT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The revolutionary childhood educator Margaret McMillan wrote in 1925, “The best classroom and the richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky.”

In our digital, urbanised, busy modern world, where mental health problems are increasingly common, revisionist movements are reminding us of the power of being in nature. The Japanese practice of *shinrin-yoku* (forest bathing), the Scandinavian *friluftsliv* (“free air life”, getting outdoors), and nature kindies, nature classrooms, and nature prescriptions handed out by general physicians in Shetland, Australia, and elsewhere all point to the power of the outdoors to enhance learning, well-being, and healing.

## OUTWARD BOUND: ORIGINS AND PARTNERS

Outward Bound has its origins in World War II, when an educator named Kurt Hahn used physically challenging activities in remote settings to unlock potential in sailors in order to increase survival rates. It worked, and when the war ended, the methodology was given life through Outward Bound. Outward Bound now numbers more than 60 organisations around the world.

Kurt Hahn said, “There is more to us than we know. If we can be made to see it, perhaps for the rest of our lives we will be unwilling to settle for less.” Seventy years on, his approach is equally relevant today.

The actions that seem the hardest are often the most effective in creating change. In 2019, that may involve unplugging; going somewhere new and inspiring; taking on physical, emotional, and mental challenges; taking time out of your routine to work on personal growth; developing mindfulness; or learning that you're capable of more than you believed.

Outward Bound works with high school students, early career professionals, for-purpose organisations and the general public to change lives through adventure learning.



## CASE STUDY: STEPPING STONE HOUSE

By Jason Juretic, CEO, Stepping Stone House, Sydney, Australia



Sydney's Stepping Stone House provides stable, safe, and secure medium-to long-term accommodation and development for young people aged 12–24 who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Its aim is to develop self-esteem, resilience, self-confidence, and good health through therapeutic care and motivational adventure education to assist young people to achieve responsible independence and to be the very best they can be. We believe that with a bit of grit, hard

work, and determination, young people can overcome all obstacles in their lives and achieve incredible personal rewards.

Stepping Stone House partnered with Outward Bound to offer our young people the opportunity to attend a camp where they could develop the skills required to later complete the “Adventurous Journey” requirement of the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award, a global youth development program.

The camp exceeded our expectations. Many of the participants referred to it as the most challenging experience of their lives, and there is little doubt it developed leaders of the next generation.

One previously disengaged young person has since caught up on her assignments and has been asked to be a student representative in the school leadership program. She said the technology-free camp made her realise how much she had looked down, and that she needed to look up more and notice the world around her.

The learning and experiences created during the camp have left lifelong memories. All the participants walked away with a sense of accomplishment. As one said, “It pushed me to do things I never thought I was capable of doing.”

### WHAT MAKES A PARTNERSHIP WORK

The most successful partnerships between Outward Bound and other for-purpose organisations are characterised by the following:

- Preparation and expectation setting on both sides
- Clear communication about desired outcomes and the challenges that will need to be overcome
- The opportunity to build rapport and engagement before the program starts
- Stewardship and active involvement during the program by the partner agency
- Selection of the right candidates for participation
- Commitment to repeating, refining, and scaling

### WHAT THE DATA SAYS

There is much data on the short- and medium-term impact of adventure learning, although there's a comparative lack of data on long-term impact. Well-designed programs produce large and demonstrable changes in soft skills such as resilience, confidence, empathy, problem solving, lateral thinking, communication, and leadership.

[Author's note: Readers interested in this topic should consult the work of Dr. James Neill from the University of Canberra. Neill is one of the world's leading researchers in this field and his measurement tools are widely used.]


As a rule of thumb, the longer and more immersive the outdoor experience, the greater the impact. Five days is widely regarded as the minimum time required for deep and lasting change. But as anyone who has skydived or bungy-jumped or otherwise stepped far outside their comfort zone knows: a short, unique, but memorable experience can also have a profound effect.

### ISN'T OUTDOOR ADVENTURE RISKY?

Outdoor activities carry some inherent risks. Outdoor adventure organisations are held to high safety standards, and most — including Outward Bound — have highly refined safety management processes. Abseiling and rafting might look and feel scary and risky, but because of the safety measures in place, there is a big difference between perceived risk (This feels scary!) and actual risk (We have this covered!). Risk is an important and managed element of someone's stepping out of their comfort zone.

### PARTNERING WITH OUTWARD BOUND: FUNDING AVAILABLE

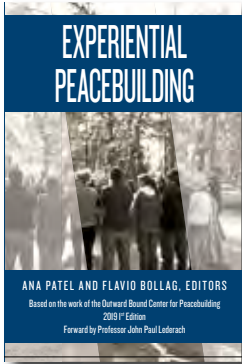
Outward Bound Australia has funding available for partners who are interested in innovative approaches to intractable problems, via a co-funding model. This is thanks to the vision and generosity of our donors via the Australian Outward Bound Development Fund.

*This article was originally published in Our Community Matters (page 34, Edition 3, 2019; June), and subsequently edited for an international readership.* 





# BOOK REVIEW



## EXPERIENTIAL PEACEBUILDING

Edited by Ana Patel and Flavio Bollag

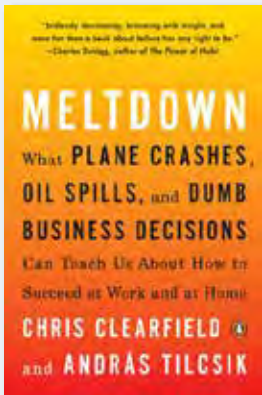
From Amazon Publishing, Seattle, Washington, USA. 2019. \$24.99 US. Paperbound. 253 pages.

In their preface to *Experiential Peacebuilding*, editors Ana Patel and Flavio Bollag—respectively, the former and current executive directors of the Brooklyn, New York-based Outward Bound Center for Peacebuilding—begin with a simple yet confident premise: “Experiential peacebuilding is a tool for lasting change.” Like most promising educational tools, this one draws inspiration from multiple sources, including earlier ideas and methods. Central among these is North Carolina Outward Bound School’s innovative Unity Project. Begun in 1997, the program aims to empower diverse communities of young people from select public schools in North Carolina to initiate social change through a wilderness-based journey designed to assert their common humanity and develop their courage and compassion as leaders.

To explain what is meant by experiential peacebuilding, the book starts with the overview in the first chapter: “Experiential peacebuilding integrates peacebuilding theory and skills with the power of experiential learning—that is, learning by doing and reflecting. It is best thought of as an active process with transformative power.” Peacebuilding theory, this book notes, is rooted in the work of John Paul Lederach, an American scholar well-regarded for his work on peacebuilding and conflict transformation, and who discusses the centrality of relationships, paradoxical curiosity, space for the creative act, and a willingness to accept risk.

The book’s ten chapters are divided into three sections. The first, “Foundations,” explains the working theories and concepts of experiential peacebuilding; the second, “Practice,” is the practitioner’s toolbox and includes chapters on design and facilitation, program planning frameworks, and the varieties of experiential exercises used in active learning. This section concludes with a chapter on case studies that exemplify how several organizations, including Outward Bound, approach this kind of work. The third and final section, “Participants and Practitioners,” is divided into two chapters; the first, presented as a series of interviews, is dedicated to profiling several of the many participants, staff, and instructors who have enlivened and enriched the international experiential peacebuilding journey, and the second introduces readers to the Outward Bound Center for Peacebuilding’s experiential peacebuilding training program and provides biographies and contact information for Outward Bound experiential peacebuilding facilitators, instructors, and organizations.

Intended as a resource for practitioners in the experiential learning and peacebuilding fields, *Experiential Peacebuilding* collects and shares the wisdom of an impressive 29 contributors, ranging from instructors and administrators, to interns, academics, and students, plus a philosopher and a CEO. The book succeeds in both in documenting the experiential peacebuilding approach developed by the Outward Bound Center for Peacebuilding, and in serving as an authoritative resource for those interested in achieving lasting change through peacebuilding.



## MELTDOWN: *What plane crashes, oil spills, and dumb business decisions can teach us about how to succeed at work and at home*

By Chris Clearfield and András Tilcsik

From Penguin Books, New York, NY, USA. 2019. \$17.00 US. Paperbound. 304 pages.

The 1986 Soviet nuclear power plant accident at Chernobyl resulted in a plume of radioactive iodine and cesium that drifted across much of northern Europe, after a safety-system test led to a reactor meltdown and explosion. Two years earlier, in his book *Normal Accidents: Living with High-Risk Technologies*, the American sociologist Charles Perrow all but predicted it would happen.

Perrow, who had earlier become acquainted with the 1979 Three Mile Island nuclear accident near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, warned that tightly-coupled and interactively complex technological systems, such as nuclear power plants, are inherently vulnerable to what he calls “system accidents” or “normal accidents.” They are considered “normal,” Perrow contends, because they are inherent to the system itself, and therefore inevitable in such systems. Paradoxically, Perrow believes, such accidents can be made more likely by

some of the very safety systems in place to prevent them.

In *Meltdown*, Chris Clearfield and András Tilcsik, respectively a systems risk consultant and a business school associate professor, effectively channel much of Perrow’s *Normal Accidents*, but offer it at a more contemporary and accessible level. *Meltdown* is a bit less about Chernobyl and a bit more about what awaits us closer to home. It warns that we’ve all become too dependent on system complexity in our everyday lives, but also offers ideas about what can be done to reduce the risks.

Examples of system disasters range from a noteworthy social media fail to a Thanksgiving dinner meltdown. To be sure, the book also covers some big disasters, such as the 2009 Washington, D.C., collision involving opposing subway trains and British Petroleum’s catastrophic 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Clearfield and Tilcsik explain how such seemingly disparate events often have much in common: a combination of complexity, tightly coupled systems, and “weak signals of failure” that are ignored, dismissed, or not recognized in time.

Throughout, *Meltdown* makes generous use of case studies, covers a wide range of topics, extols the virtues of preventative measures, such as the pre-mortem—the temporal opposite of a post-mortem—where imagining how to avoid future disasters is more important than digesting those meltdowns that have already occurred; and highlights the value of learning lessons from “near misses,” the hindsight situations where something bad could have happened, but did not.

In *Meltdown* Clearfield and Tilcsik offer readers a glimmer of hope that some forms of accident might be a little less inevitable if you take time to understand and simplify the systems that serve to animate them and then get better at detecting and measuring the “weak signals” that predict them.

# GEAR

## MiiR POURIGAMI™

At about \$70,000 US per kg, launching heavy stuff into space is astronomically expensive, but astronauts deserve a good cup of coffee just like other coffee lovers. And so it was that in 2015, the International Space Station (ISS) got its first espresso machine. Designed for use in microgravity and weighing in at 20 kg, the Italian coffee brewer was cleverly named ISSpresso. It allowed the ISS astrobaristas to dispense caffès freddos and macchiatos with abandon, until the end of its super-caffeinated mission in 2017.

Weight and space—and a good cup of coffee—are important considerations for outdoorsy Earth-dwellers too. If something takes up too much space or weighs a lot, it's likely to be left behind. Luckily, for weight-conscious drip coffee drinkers, there's finally a solution. At almost the same volume and weight as a smartphone, the Pourigami portable coffee dripper from MiiR is the world's smallest. It's large enough for a full cup of coffee yet small enough to stash just about anywhere—except the next ISS launch mission. Drips don't drop in microgravity, they need to be espressoed!

The Pourigami—also cleverly named—assembles easily, origami-style, with its three interlocking food-grade stainless steel panels forming a stable perch atop your favorite mug. Just drop in a number two filter cone and you'll be ready to launch into the morning.

Seattle, USA-Based MiiR was founded in 2010 with a charitable outlook and a mission to use business to empower people around the world.

Weight 113 g. Dimensions 6.2 cm x 12.7 cm x 2.4 mm. Colors: Black, stainless steel, and white.

**\$30 US**

[www.miiir.com](http://www.miiir.com)



## TENTSILE STINGRAY TREE TENT



Winning the German Design Award Gold 2016 for its Stingray Tree Tent helped elevate UK-based Tentsile above its competition. The Stingray is “at once functional and poetic,” according to the folks at the German Design Award. The Stingray artfully combines hammock and tent, becoming a practical alternative to “ground tenting” for those who aspire to low-impact camping.

Elevated camping is more than just an aesthetic experience. With a detachable rainfly to keep moisture out and a mesh roof to let the starlight in (and keep the bugs away), the Stingray can accommodate three people and gear when suspended from the necessary three trees. The Stingray's floor is held comfortably flat by the pull of its three-point anchor system, and it has a large “dry storage” area located beneath the tent.

stably “inside any acute-angled triangle” (where angles measure less than 90°). The company also reminds campers to “pick your trees wisely” because the tree tent can produce a tension load of up to 15 kilonewtons—about the equivalent weight of a midsize car.

Headquartered in Sheffield, England, Tentsile was founded in London in 2012, and now operates a US distribution center and store in Ogden, Utah, and another store in Bend, Oregon.

Weight 9.5 kg. Floor 7.25 m<sup>2</sup>. Maximum load capacity when suspended 400 kg.

**\$650.00 US**

[www.tentsile.com](http://www.tentsile.com)





**OUTWARD BOUND**  
INTERNATIONAL

# ANNUAL REPORT

2018



# CHAIR'S REPORT



Andrew Smith receives the Distinguished Service Award in Hong Kong  
(L to R: David Kong, Andrew Smith, Iain Peter, Colin Maund)

It is my privilege, on behalf of the Board, to report on the activities of Outward Bound International (OBI) in 2018.

OBI was created to oversee i) licensing of new Outward Bound Schools, ii) risk management and program quality standards for all Outward Bound Schools across the network, iii) brand management, and iv) the promotion of communications and networking amongst OBI members. Our mandate states that OBI exists:

***To promote and protect the good name of Outward Bound throughout the world, and to assist in the establishment, development, and support of Outward Bound Centers able to provide safe, high-quality programs that fulfill the Mission of Outward Bound.***

2018 was a busy year for OBI:

- We held two Board meetings: in Romania (where we helped celebrate OB Romania's 25th anniversary) and in Hong Kong.
- Andrew Smith's time on the OBI Board came to an end and we presented him with a Distinguished Service Award at our meeting in Hong Kong.

Executive Directors from Schools around the world met together for three days just before our Board meeting, hosted by OB Romania. This had been requested by the network at the 2017 World Conference and OBI was delighted to facilitate the meeting. Attendees had great discussions, formed friendships,



and had time to experience the wonderful Romanian hospitality. It has been agreed that OBI will host a gathering of Executive Directors in the years between our Biennial World Conferences. The next gathering will be hosted by OB Brazil in April 2020.

The OBI Board also had a very productive time in Romania. As part of our Strategic Planning work, we held a day of facilitated discussion that was instrumental in producing the 2019–2021 Strategic Plan that was adopted in Oman earlier this year.



## Work Programs

Following on from our World Conference in North Carolina in 2016, OBI has been moving forward with the following projects:

- Development of our Global Portal platform for sharing ideas and knowledge between members
- On-going collaboration between Schools
- What does “Good Governance” look like in Outward Bound?

2018 also saw the conclusion of our work on the seminal “What it Means to be Outward Bound” document which has been warmly received by Schools around the world.

## Licensing Matters

A central part of OBI’s core activities, along with brand management and risk management, is the provision of oversight for licensing activities across the network.

The OBI Board agreed, at our Hong Kong meeting, to recommend that Outward Bound Vietnam be awarded a Full License, after operating under a Provisional License since 2016.

Outward Bound Wuhan presented to the Board in Hong Kong and we were delighted to award them Exploratory

Status. We are very grateful to OB Hong Kong for the work they have done in helping identify such a good partner for us to work with in China.

Outward Bound UAE and Outward Bound Netherlands continue with their Provisional Licences. We will continue to provide ongoing support to these Schools as they progress with their Outward Bound journey towards licensure.

## CONCLUSION

Special thanks to Iain Peter, our Executive Director, and Rob Chatfield, our Associate Director, for their countless hours of travel and dedication. Thanks also to our Board and the members of the committees responsible for Operations (Sarah Wiley), Risk Management (Tim Medhurst), Finance (Colin Maund), and Nominations & Governance (John Atkin).



**David Kong**  
*Chair, Outward Bound International*

# MISSION & SCOPE OF OUTWARD BOUND

## Mission statement of Outward Bound International:

We enable our member Schools to be more effective and more resilient and we promote and protect the name and trademark Outward Bound.

Outward Bound International is on a global mission to help improve the effectiveness and fitness of its network of schools through a variety of ongoing and special initiatives. The following five priorities guide the organization's efforts in supporting Outward Bound worldwide.

### 1. Protecting & promoting the Outward Bound brand.

Outward Bound International ensures registration of the trademark in any country with current or potential Outward Bound activity, and manages the organization's reputation by monitoring infringements on names, marks, logos, and designs related to Outward Bound. In recent years, domain name protection has received increased focus. To strengthen brand visibility, a website is maintained that serves as a global portal for those seeking information about Outward Bound.

### 2. Maintaining a focus on quality & innovation.

In the last decade, Outward Bound International has developed Risk Management and Quality Review systems. Every two years a detailed risk management assessment is made in each country in which Outward Bound operates, by teams of experienced Outward Bound staff trained by Outward Bound International. While this system is unparalleled in the adventure program field, Outward Bound International has developed a complementary process that systematically examines ways to improve the quality of service development and delivery processes.

### 3. Strengthening risk management standards.

Outward Bound International produces an annual Global Risk Management Report on operations. Through its Program Review system, it also works with its member schools to continuously upgrade standards across the world.

### 4. Strengthening financial health.

Outward Bound International is continually trying to expand the number of sources from which charitable contributions are made to the organization. These efforts include offers of Guest Expeditions to interesting regions of the world for supporters who are willing to make a tax deductible contribution to Outward Bound beyond the trip cost; and the establishment of an endowment campaign to ensure the future of Outward Bound worldwide.

### 5. Fostering free & open communication and collaboration.

In partnership with the schools, Outward Bound International hosts events such as world conferences and staff symposia. Additionally, an annual journal, this one, is offered electronically and in print; and an expanding internal website, which offers many resources and ways for sharing them, is available to Board members and the network of schools.

Every year numerous requests are made to Outward Bound International from individuals and organizations interested in bringing Outward Bound to their country. This is a clear tribute to Kurt Hahn and those who have pressed on in service of his bandwagon.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



David Kong  
Chair (from Nov 2017)  
Hong Kong



Sarah Wiley  
Chair, OpsCom  
Canada



John Atkin  
Australia



Pamela Fralick  
Canada



Colin Maund  
UK



Hilal Al Mawali  
Oman



Tim Medhurst  
Australia



Henry Morse  
USA



Andrew Smith  
New Zealand



# SERVING OUTWARD BOUND

## OBI Boards Worldwide

Each country in which Outward Bound operates has a slightly different board structure depending on the cultural norms and government structure for charitable organizations. The essential element is that each Outward Bound school serves a diversity of young people with a governing board comprised of volunteer; non-paid community members who oversee its mission and operations.

## Governing Board

The Governing Board of Directors is given the legal corporate authority and responsibility for an organization's formation and operation, for its stability, and for providing links to other organizations and parts of the community. The board can mean the difference between public understanding and support of programs and public apathy or even antipathy. Boards that understand their role and fulfill their responsibility are essential to the well-being of not-for-profit organizations such as Outward Bound.

## Operations Committee

The Operations Committee (Ops Com) is made up of experienced executive directors from around the network. Membership, at the invitation of the chair, is of a fixed term and members are invited so that Ops Com is broadly representative of the network. Ops Com advises the OBI executive director; and provides technical guidance on operational matters to the board.



# TREASURER'S REPORT



I am pleased to be able to report again that the Outward Bound network has continued to thrive, with overall school revenue yet again exceeding \$100 million USD and signs of progress in a number of areas. Coordination within the network has improved dramatically in recent years and particularly since the advent of regular World Conferences.

Each Outward Bound school is financially independent and has responsibility for its own financial performance, so the accounts presented here are solely for Outward Bound International (OBI). OBI acts as a coordinator for the schools and awards, and maintains licences as the agent of Outward Bound Global, the ultimate trademark owner of the Outward Bound name and process.

In 2018 we saw OBI funding from schools rise again as our move to a new funding structure became established. Direct revenue increased to \$297,423 US from \$281,769 US in 2017. We do need to bear in mind that the new arrangements include OBI paying for all program reviewer travel expenses; whereas previously schools funded reviewer travel themselves. OBI also now covers the costs associated with trademark registration renewals within the new fee arrangements. Both of these arrangements greatly facilitate our schools' ability to budget and, at the same time, allow the associated costs to be transparently identified.

The core elements of OBI's service to the network remain in line with cost expectations. The areas that have been driving increased costs are threefold: the additional costs explained above caused by OBI taking on direct responsibility for funding travel by assessors, the costs of continuing legal fees associated with the company's move from the US to Canada, and work on the projects identified by the World Conference last year in North Carolina.

OBI benefited this year from a very generous donation from our out-going Vice Chair Andrew Smith. Andrew has been a key contributor to our Strategic Plan work and his donation will enable us to begin to realise the objectives outlined in the plan.

Without Andrew's donation, operating losses in the year amounted to \$49,325 US (\$42,154 US loss in 2017). With the benefit of the donation, net assets rose to \$859,297 compared to \$707,632 US in 2017. We expect 2019 to show a further reduction in the loss attributable to reserves. The Board believe that with the steps already in hand to maintain cost efficiency, together with new fundraising initiatives underway, the company will be able to balance expenditure against income in the long term and so will be able to meet the increasing requirements of our member schools and fulfil our contract with Outward Bound Global.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

### Outward Bound International Inc. Comparative Statement of Financial Position As of December 31st, 2018 (Expressed in US\$)

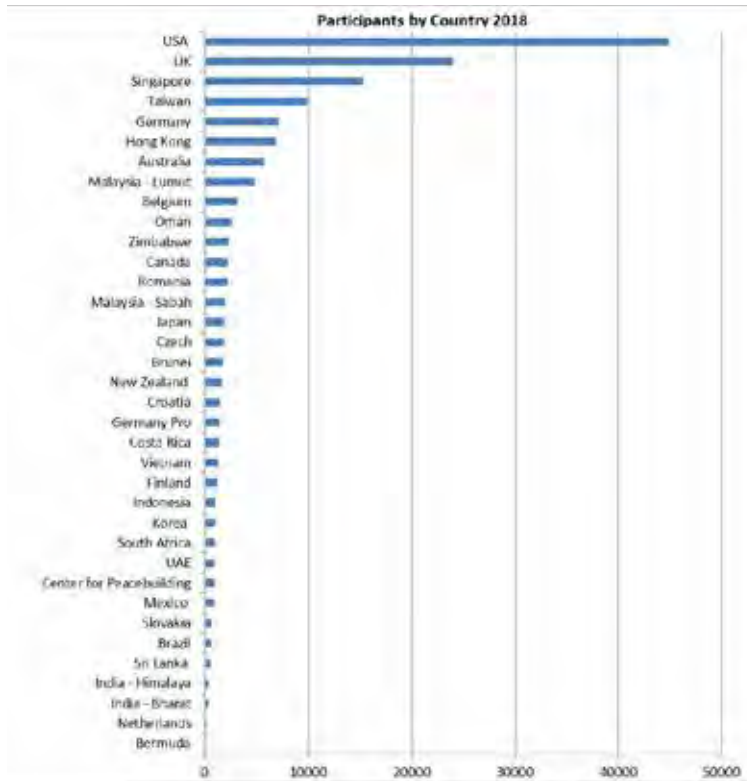
|   | 2018             | 2017           |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Assets</b>   |                  |                |
| <b>Current Assets:</b>  |                  |                |
| Cash and cash equivalents - unrestricted  | \$830,281        | \$731,620      |
| Prepaid expenses  | 5,234            | 5,240          |
| Receivables from OBI Schools, less allowance for doubtful accounts of \$3,000 for 2018 and 2017 | 98,548           | 117,704        |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>   | <b>934,063</b>   | <b>854,564</b> |
| <b>Property and equipment</b>   | 5,869            | 3,759          |
| <u>Accumulated depreciation</u>   | <u>(2,125)</u>   | <u>(1,128)</u> |
| <b>Property and equipment</b>   | <b>3,744</b>     | <b>2,631</b>   |
| <b>Total Assets</b>   | <b>\$937,807</b> | <b>857,195</b> |
| <b>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>   |                  |                |
| <b>Current Liabilities:</b>   |                  |                |
| Accounts payable  | \$78,510         | 135,237        |
| Funds held for others   | -                | 14,326         |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b>  | <b>78,510</b>    | <b>149,563</b> |
| <b>Net Assets:</b>  |                  |                |
| Unrestricted  | 859,297          | 707,632        |
| <b>Total Net Assets</b>   | <b>859,297</b>   | <b>707,632</b> |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>   | <b>\$937,807</b> | <b>857,195</b> |

### Outward Bound International Inc. Comparative Statement of Activities For the Year Ended December 31st, 2018 (Expressed in US\$)

|                                    | 2018             | 2017           |
|------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Revenue &amp; Support:</b>      |                  |                |
| Fees from OBI Schools              | \$297,423        | 281,769        |
| Contributions                      | 200,070          | 13,456         |
| Other fees                         | 15,302           | 17,185         |
| <b>Total Revenue &amp; Support</b> | <b>512,795</b>   | <b>312,410</b> |
| <b>Operating Expenses:</b>         |                  |                |
| Bad debts                          | 13,858           | -              |
| Bank charges                       | 3,882            | 3,987          |
| Depreciation                       | 998              | 753            |
| Insurance                          | 12,349           | 11,279         |
| Legal & professional               | 42,692           | 60,715         |
| Office supplies and miscellaneous  | 1,423            | 4,798          |
| Personnel                          | 210,343          | 198,686        |
| Printing and publications          | 10,653           | 14,076         |
| Rent                               | 7,339            | 8,010          |
| Telephone and internet             | 2,393            | 1,790          |
| Travel                             | 56,190           | 50,470         |
| <b>Total Operating Expenses</b>    | <b>362,120</b>   | <b>354,564</b> |
| Operating income (loss)            | 150,675          | (42,154)       |
| <b>OTHER INCOME (LOSS):</b>        |                  |                |
| Investment income                  | 990              | 634            |
| <b>Total other income (loss)</b>   | <b>990</b>       | <b>634</b>     |
| Increase (Decrease) in net assets  | 151,665          | (41,520)       |
| Net assets—beginning of year       | 707,632          | 749,152        |
| Increase (Decrease) in net assets  | 151,665          | (41,520)       |
| <b>Net assets—end of year</b>      | <b>\$859,297</b> | <b>707,632</b> |

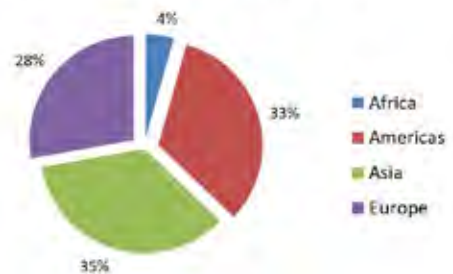


# PARTICIPATION



Participant numbers after 2014 reflect a reduction of 70,000 due to the withdrawal of Expeditionary Learning from OB USA

## Participants by Region 2018



# OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOLS WORLDWIDE

## Australia

[www.outwardbound.org.au](http://www.outwardbound.org.au)

## Belgium

[www.outwardbound.be](http://www.outwardbound.be)

## Bermuda

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

## Brazil

[www.obb.org.br](http://www.obb.org.br)

## Brunei Darussalam

## Canada

[www.outwardbound.ca](http://www.outwardbound.ca)

## Costa Rica

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

## Croatia

[www.outwardbound.hr](http://www.outwardbound.hr)

## Czech Republic

[www.outwardbound.cz](http://www.outwardbound.cz)

## Finland

[www.outwardbound.fi](http://www.outwardbound.fi)

## Germany

[www.outwardbound.de](http://www.outwardbound.de)

## Germany Professional

[www.outwardbound-professional.de](http://www.outwardbound-professional.de)

## Hong Kong

[www.outwardbound.org.hk](http://www.outwardbound.org.hk)

## India-Bharat

[www.outwardbound.org.in](http://www.outwardbound.org.in)

## India-Himalaya

[www.outwardboundindia.com](http://www.outwardboundindia.com)

## Indonesia

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

## Japan

[www.obs-japan.org](http://www.obs-japan.org)

## Korea

[www.outwardbound.co.kr](http://www.outwardbound.co.kr)

## Malaysia-Lumut

[www.outwardbound.my](http://www.outwardbound.my)

## Malaysia-Sabah

[www.outwardbound.my](http://www.outwardbound.my)

## Mexico

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

## Netherlands (Provisional License)

[www.outwardboundnetherlands.com](http://www.outwardboundnetherlands.com)

## New Zealand

[www.outwardbound.co.nz](http://www.outwardbound.co.nz)

## Oman

[www.outwardboundoman.com](http://www.outwardboundoman.com)

## Romania

[outwardbound.ro](http://outwardbound.ro)

## Sabah

[www.outwardbound.com.my](http://www.outwardbound.com.my)

## Singapore

[www.obs.nyc.gov.sg](http://www.obs.nyc.gov.sg)

## Slovak Republic

[www.outwardbound.sk](http://www.outwardbound.sk)

## South Africa

[www.outwardbound.co.za](http://www.outwardbound.co.za)

## Sri Lanka

[www.obsl-lk.org](http://www.obsl-lk.org)

## Taiwan

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

## UAE (Provisional License)

[www.outwardbound.ae](http://www.outwardbound.ae)

## UK

[www.outwardbound.org.uk](http://www.outwardbound.org.uk)

## USA

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

## Vietnam (Provisional License)

[www.obv.vn](http://www.obv.vn)

## Zimbabwe

[www.outwardbound.org.zw](http://www.outwardbound.org.zw)

## Outward Bound Peacebuilding

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

## Outward Bound International

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Bermuda  
Brazil  
Brunei  
Canada  
Costa Rica  
Croatia

Czech Republic  
Finland  
Germany  
Germany-Pro  
Hong Kong  
India-Bharat  
India-Himalaya

Indonesia  
Japan  
Korea  
Malaysia-Lumut  
Malaysia-Sabah  
Mexico  
New Zealand

Netherlands  
Oman  
Romania  
Singapore  
Slovak Republic  
South Africa  
Sri Lanka

Taiwan  
UAE  
UK  
USA  
Vietnam  
Zimbabwe  
OB Peacebuilding