

# IMPACT REPORT

2021



THE CONSCIOUS  
TRAVEL FOUNDATION



## FOREWORD



A year on since the inception of The Conscious Travel Foundation, we're proud to be sharing our 2021 Impact Report with our members and friends. The support we've received from our peers and mentors has contributed to the phenomenal momentum and growth of the Foundation, during one of the most difficult periods for our industry in living memory. Over the course of our first year, we've developed a clear vision with three pillars that guide our operations; we connect the good people, we educate through workshops and thought-leadership, and we donate to grass-roots organisations around the world, chosen by our members.

We'd like to extend our thanks to our founding members and the industry experts and mentors we've partnered with for their tremendous support, participation and feedback, which has shaped and inspired our work. A special thanks to our mentors Portia Hart, Charlie Carlow, Petit Miribel, Suzanne Bayly-Coupe, Ang Tshering and Penny Rafferty; and to our patron, Jaisal Singh, whose support and advice has been invaluable during our first year of operations.

Creating this report has allowed us to take stock of our collective achievements, and to continue creating and delivering our aims for the future, harnessing the power of education and collaboration to shift our industry towards positive-impact travel as status-quo.

**THE CONSCIOUS TRAVEL FOUNDATION TEAM**

## THE STORY SO FAR

The Conscious Travel Foundation was established in April 2020, as the full weight of the pandemic started to be felt across the travel industry. Having seen and heard the devastating impact that the virus had caused on the hospitality industry worldwide, the founders of TCTF came together to see how we could make a meaningful difference.

We spent countless hours speaking (via Zoom) to partners and peers across the globe, and realised that there was a real opportunity to make a tangible impact in the longer term, so we set out to create a platform that allowed us to 'connect the good people' in the travel industry – those purpose-led businesses with good intentions, striving for change. We believe that looking beyond our individual businesses and joining forces will allow our industry to have the greatest impact on community, conservation and the climate – sharing ideas on how we can 'travel better' and filtering that knowledge down to the consumer.

We decided from the start that opening membership to all sectors of the travel industry – from hotels, travel designers and DMCS, to sales and marketing, media and PR - was the best way to create the ripple effect necessary to inspire change. We welcomed a cross-section of members from around the world, some of whom offered years of sustainability expertise, and others at the start of their journey with great intentions.

In its first year, the foundation was largely run on a voluntary basis by the five founders, with a small budget allocated to website, marketing and personnel. Today, the day-to-day running of the foundation falls to Maudie and Olivia, with the founders providing ongoing support with finance, recruitment, content and more.



## OUR VISION

The Conscious Travel Foundation is a global community uniting members of the travel industry to reshape the impact of tourism on the world. We believe in the power of education and collaboration to fuel a shift in industry practice, igniting change and safeguarding the planet for future generations.

We have an established vision with three clear objectives:

### CONNECTING THE GOOD PEOPLE

Create a collective of conscious travel businesses from across the industry and the globe, uniting them and providing a platform for collaboration, learning and action.

### EDUCATION

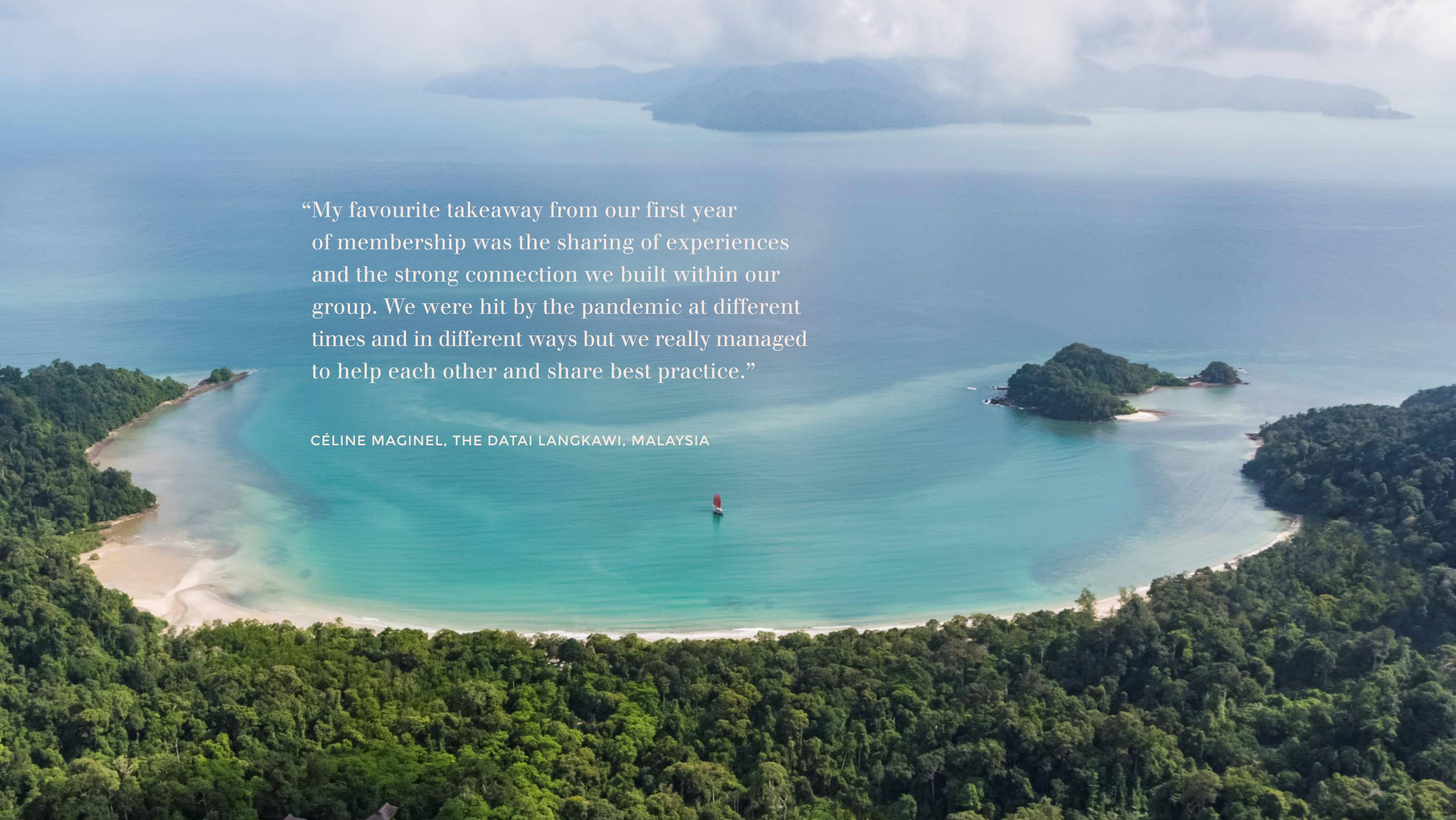
Promote sustainable, inclusive travel through education and thought leadership. Drawing on our panel of experts, and other great minds in the industry to share best practice.

### FUNDRAISING

All profits are donated to grass-roots charity projects around the world, chosen by our members.



We believe in the power of education and collaboration to fuel a shift in industry practice, igniting change and safeguarding the planet for future generations.



“My favourite takeaway from our first year of membership was the sharing of experiences and the strong connection we built within our group. We were hit by the pandemic at different times and in different ways but we really managed to help each other and share best practice.”

CÉLINE MAGINEL, THE DATAI LANGKAWI, MALAYSIA

## ACHIEVEMENTS IN YEAR ONE

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### CONNECTING THE GOOD PEOPLE

3000

Instagram followers

80 HRS

of weekly  
board meetings

32

members connected  
from 16 countries  
around the world

5

Sectors of the travel  
industry united in  
membership

6 HRS

of focus groups to  
create the toolkit

EDUCATION

1

Conscious Travel  
Foundation Toolkit

28

Group  
mentorship  
sessions

4

Conscious  
Conversation  
Events

1

Digital resource  
library containing  
over 100 articles,  
reports, videos and  
podcasts

7

Sustainability mavericks  
on our panel of experts

FUNDRAISING

1

Glass oven sponsored for the  
Green Apple Foundation

1800

Trees planted in partnership  
with TreeSisters

9600

GBP donated to local grass-roots  
projects in 12 different countries

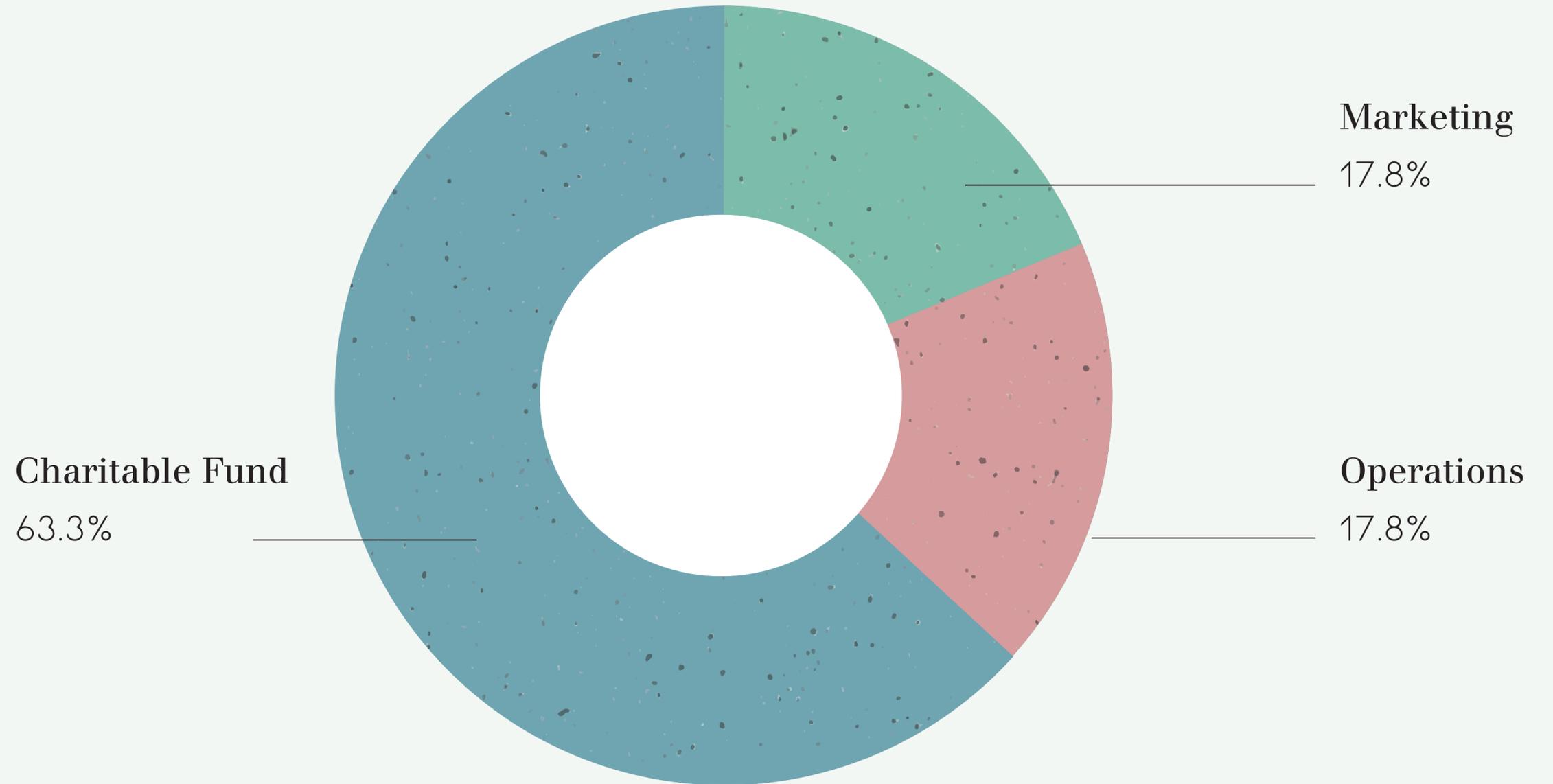
15,000

GBP Charitable Fund donated  
to Virunga National Park

## MEMBERSHIP FEES



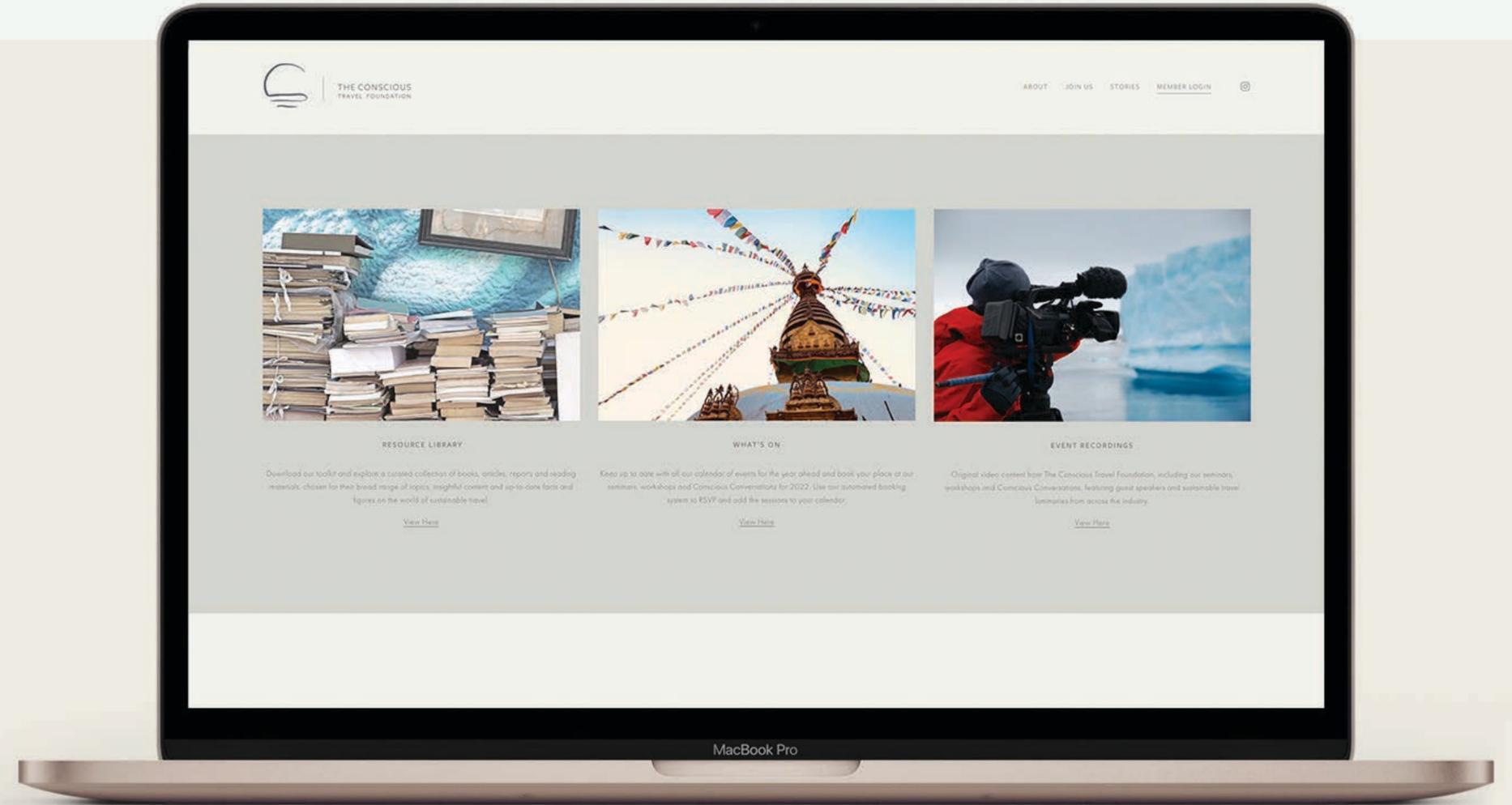
The Conscious Travel Foundation is a registered Community Interest Company (CIC), also known as a 'social enterprise'. As a non-profit entity we have an asset lock in place, ensuring that all proceeds from membership fees and any additional fundraising are directed to our chosen charitable projects, less our admin and marketing costs.



*\*Financials from January – December 2021*

## OUR RESOURCES

In 2021, we created a private Members Area on our website to provide convenient access to resources that will help our members on their sustainability journey. This password-protected area allows our members to download our Toolkit and our marketing assets, browse our resource library and access a video archive that houses all the past recorded sessions.



### RESOURCE LIBRARY

Home to our toolkit and a curated collection of books, articles, reports and reading materials, chosen for their broad range of topics, insightful content and useful data.

### WHAT'S ON

A calendar of events and booking system for our seminars, workshops and Conscious Conversations for 2022.

### EVENT RECORDINGS

Original video content including seminars, workshops and Conscious Conversations, featuring guest speakers and sustainable travel luminaries from across the industry.

## THE CONSCIOUS TRAVEL FOUNDATION CHARITABLE FUND

One of the three pillars of The Conscious Travel Foundation is philanthropy. Given our global demographic, we wanted to facilitate an equitable spread of donations and ensure our members had a meaningful connection to the causes they were supporting. Therefore, our charitable fund is broken down into two streams:

### LOCAL CAUSES

Our hotel and DMC members donate the charitable portion of their membership fees to a local charity project of their choice in their country of origin, in the name of The Conscious Travel Foundation.

### MAIN BENEFICIARY

The charitable portion of the membership fees from our agent and marketing members is pooled to create our annual charitable fund. We asked all of our members to nominate a cause or project as our main beneficiary, before showcasing each of the projects on our website and asking our members to vote on who should be the recipient of our charitable fund.



2021 MAIN BENEFICIARY

VIRUNGA NATIONAL PARK

The first beneficiary for The Conscious Travel Foundation Charitable Fund was Virunga National Park in eastern Congo - one of the most biodiverse places on earth and home to some of the last remaining mountain gorillas. Virunga's rangers work tirelessly, risking their lives to protect the gorillas from poachers and armed-militia and we are proud to be supporting them in their efforts.

PARK DIRECTOR, EMMANUEL DE MERODE:

“With your support, we’d really like to help the rangers to rebuild the park in its ability to welcome visitors after the incredibly challenging years we’ve been through. Virunga has always been the runt of the litter, when it comes to Gorilla tourism, when compared to Rwanda and Uganda.

But I’m convinced that we could build something absolutely extraordinary if we can train and support some of our best rangers to accompany visitors and provide them with an unforgettable experience with the gorillas that draws them into the conservation effort. I think it could make an enormous difference to Virunga’s ability to bounce back after the incredibly difficult years that we’ve experienced.”



Mountain Gorilla painted by conservation artist and friend of The Conscious Travel Foundation, Violet Astor.

## LOCAL DISTRIBUTIONS OF CHARITABLE FUNDS

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**AHIPARA TRAVEL,  
NEW ZEALAND**  
Hollyford Conservation Trust



**AYU IN THE WILD,  
SRI LANKA**  
Classrooms In the Wild



**BANYAN TOURS,  
INDIA**  
Shakti Foundation



**BY AMANDA,  
AUSTRALIA**  
Nullaki Conservation  
Half Cut



**CREES MANU, PERU**  
Crees Manu Foundation



**ENIGMA, PERU**  
Asociacion Maria Reiche



**EXP JOURNEYS, USA**  
Wildlife Tourism For Tomorrow -  
Jackson Elk Project



**GALAVANTA, COLOMBIA**  
Fundacion Hogar Juvenil



**PLAN IT MOROCCO,  
MOROCCO**  
Dar Taliba



**SAMPAN TOURS,  
BURMA**  
Green Hill Valley Elephant Camp



**THE DATAI, MALAYSIA**  
The Datai Pledge



**THE SAFARI SERIES,  
KENYA**  
The Opuntia Project

“Sampan Travel’s membership of the Conscious Travel Foundation has coincided with the two greatest crises that Myanmar has faced in recent years: COVID-19 and the military coup. In times of crisis, it can be easy to neglect our local communities and the environment, and not consider the impact we are having on them. The Conscious Travel Foundation has ensured that we continue to consider that impact. It has kept us in touch with a network of professionals and organisations from whom we have learnt and been encouraged. And reminded us that together we can do better, and together we can do much more.”

BERTIE LAWSON, SAMPAN TRAVEL, MYANMAR



## THE SAFARI SERIES OPUNTIA PROJECT



MOON HOUGH,  
Founder of the Safari Series



MOON HOUGH, FOUNDER OF THE SAFARI SERIES –

“A survey was done of the population of Makurian, the neighbouring group ranch to Lolldaiga Hills (on our northern border), to find out which issues were causing the community the most anguish. The answers were wide-ranging; lack of employment, deforestation, overgrazing, irregular rains causing drought, lack of education opportunities... But one answer stood out again and again; Opuntia.

Opuntia has caused issues across many other places in Africa, including South Africa, where studies and research into how to stop their spread have taken place - but still not much is known about how to stop them once and for all. The Safari Series has been working with Youth Leader, Elijah (also The Safari Series guide) to create action plans, based on research work from South Africa, to work to stop the spread of Opuntia while also creating employment in the area. The Safari Series came on board as a partner to fund two segments of the project, in the name of The Conscious Travel Foundation. To date, 80 people have been employed monthly for 1.5 years and over 7 acres of land have been cleared to create space for a new tourism-focused Cultural Centre (another way to bring money to the community.)”

## THE SAFARI SERIES OPUNTIA PROJECT



ELIJAH,  
Maasai Youth Leader and Guide  
at The Safari Series

### ELIJAH, MAASAI YOUTH LEADER AND GUIDE AT THE SAFARI SERIES -

“The livelihood isn’t like it was 10 years ago, it is very dry, there is not much water and so the livestock has to migrate from one place to another. In Maasai, the word for climate change is Enkibelekenyata Enkijape. We used to have long rains in March, then the short rains from October to November. But now we have very little rain. All the seasons and rains have their own names, but when it rained, this year, in January we didn’t have a name for it. We are expecting a small rain in February; when it rains then, the Acacia tree fruits and the goats will eat it. Then we are hoping for the long rains in March. The community might have a hard time in the future, the climate has really changed, the rain is not with us.

The Opuntia is a plant that does well in dry and degraded areas. It was introduced in the 1950’s by the Italians, and can get stuck on the mouths of the animals and causes them to die. It also stops other plants from growing.

We have spent one year manually removing the Opuntia to shrink the area where it grows down. We are employing 40 people a month and we want to do away with it – it is killing all our animals including livestock like cows and goats, even elephants, zebras and baboons. The Safari Series is doing a great job for the community to see what we can do with the removal of the plant. The community chose the area to clear as they want to put a ‘manyatta’ there (cultural centre for women to sell items to tourists), where people can come and learn everything from the Maasai.”

## AYU IN THE WILD - CLASSROOMS IN THE WILD



CHAMINTHA JAYASINGHE,  
Founder of Ayu In The Wild

CHAMINTHA JAYASINGHE, FOUNDER OF AYU IN THE WILD-

“The project we support in the name of The Conscious Travel Foundation is our own initiative, Classrooms In The Wild. During the pandemic, it was vital to us that we continued to run this community outreach project, despite a lack of regular bookings. Each Saturday morning, kids logged-in on smartphones (most kids sharing one phone) to follow spoken English lessons conducted via Zoom by a teacher who lives nearby - with over 50% of the students who attended Zoom lessons being girls. We continued lesson planning as usual, coordinated weekly by the staff of Ayu in the Wild and the English Teacher.

Our mentor, brought on in 2020, has developed a unique and an extraordinarily successful methodology of teaching English to rural kids whose native language is Sinhala, simplifying the arduous local-school curriculum that is more prone to exam-oriented learning. His mentoring has helped our team during lesson planning and made a significant difference to the progress of the kids in Sigiriya who have struggled through online lessons.

In March 2022, our physical classes resumed, including extra revision classes. Today, approximately 20-25 school children from a rural community located just 7 kilometres from Sri Lanka’s World Heritage Site of Sigiriya form the core of Classrooms in the Wild. They come from approximately 22 families (totalling to about 104 people) whose main livelihood is through farming vegetables and rice paddies. The UNSGD goal 4, with which we are very much aligned, aims to ‘ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.’ The work we do with Classrooms in the Wild creates opportunities for these rural kids, including girls in this disconnected community, to fulfil their dreams of achieving.”

## SPOTLIGHT ON OUR MEMBERS

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We are proud to welcome members from a wide intersection of the travel industry, at all stages of their sustainability journey. Our close-knit community continues to drive the evolution of the foundation, sharing successes, struggles, innovation and ideas with the aim of influencing positive change in tourism.

Membership to The Conscious Travel Foundation is reviewed annually to ensure that our members continue to take strides towards being more sustainable, purpose-driven businesses. During this process, our members share their achievements and goals for the year ahead. Here we shine a light on just some of our members and their contributions to both the foundation and the wider travel industry.



## WANDERLUX



REBECCA PUTTOCK,  
Founder of Wanderlux, UK

“Travel is not a sustainable hobby, there’s a fine line between accepting that and taking ownership of it. The whole point of The Conscious Travel Foundation is to shift people’s mindsets, personally it has made me face the elephant in the room and be honest about the situation. The Conscious Travel Foundation also helped me find my path. My clients are predominantly UHNWs and they can be influential people. Since joining The Conscious Travel Foundation, I’ve started utilising my connections with these people to have hard conversations. The Antarctica trip that I hosted in December 2021 was a key moment for me to attempt to shift the mind-set of my billionaire clients. We were there for the Total Solar Eclipse, and we had former NASA Astronaut and Adventurer Nicole Stott on board with us. Nicole ran workshops on the eclipse and talked through her personal experience of seeing this phenomenon from both space and earth. We also had a Green Peace Ambassador and wildlife photographer Roie Galitz onboard, hosting talks on weather patterns and wildlife changes, including saving the oceans for carbon sequestration. We went 200-metres down scanning a part of the Antarctic that hadn’t been seen before. This was incredibly humbling for my

clients, they saw the first hand impact of climate change, they had important conversations with our experts onboard, and they left this trip genuinely driven to make a positive impact.

Everything I’d listened to since being a member of The Conscious Travel Foundation, that was the first trip for me that I put those wheels in motion. I am seeing the investment they are now making into these projects. I am now involved in a really exciting long-term partnership with space education teams at NASA on their and Astronaut Wrangler and former manager of Buzz Aldrin, Christina Korp, (Founder of “Space For A Better World”) drawing the connection between space technology and how that can be used to better life on Earth. Ultimately, we want to close the gap between the scientists and the billionaires.

On a day-to-day level, my promise is that every trip I organise must have a direct link to a project; whether in-house or on a grander scale.

I communicate this through every presentation deck, and I talk about my partnership with The Conscious Travel Foundation so my clients know about the organisation and my ethos.”

BY GEORGIE



GEORGE COKE,  
By Georgie, UK



“As co- founder of The Conscious Travel Foundation, it was important to me that my clients joined me on this journey to a better travel industry. I represent some of the world’s most purpose-driven, responsible DMCs, each striving to become better businesses and influence the travel supply chain in their country of origin. I am proud to say that all of my clients are now members of The Conscious Travel Foundation. From banishing plastic water bottles in India in favour of safe, filtered water, to undertaking sustainability leadership courses and working towards B Corp certification, my clients are making great strides to improve their operations on the ground. In addition, they are some of the most active members of our community, facilitating essential conversations and personally inspiring me every day.”

## BEYUL EXPERIENCES



ANG TSHERING,  
Beyul Experiences, Nepal

“Our first year with The Conscious Travel Foundation has been a year of very insightful learning and exchange of ideas. We have been so inspired by all the fellow members and it has been great to be in a community of likeminded individuals who have a sincere interest to take a step towards positive change, preservation and regeneration of our environment, and spread happiness. In the Buddha’s teachings, he has emphasized on the importance of ‘Sangha’ (community), when one begins on a journey towards enlightenment or awakening. He has said sometimes starting a new journey alone we are scared, have doubts we are not enough to make a certain change, or even not disciplined enough to continue on with it. But having a Sangha to share this with, not only keeps us motivated and on track but also we constantly learn something new and we get to our destination quicker. So being a part of the Foundation has been full of inspiration for me and our team and we have taken some new conscious actions in our operations.

The Phaplu Mountain Bike Club is one of the beneficiaries of our involvement with the Foundation. Listening to stories of other members and conservationists working in their own respective fields, we have come to appreciate how important it is to make community engagement not just as something to talk about, spending very little resources, but something that should be an integral part of our business - giving it as much attention as any other aspect of the business. So every single member of our team has to contribute their time on some of our social activities including Phaplu Mountain Bike Club. This way, we are constantly coming up with new ideas, staying engaged, and progressing with our work.

As previously shared, I strongly believe that it is our actions that constitute our life, and this action the members of the Foundation are taking collectively must be taken not once but over and over again, to inspire many others to join us, until each one of us forms a multitude of conscious living. And this in itself is the most inspiring for me as a part of the Foundation. “

## IN THE PRESS

“Set up during the Covid-19 pandemic, in response to the devastating impact on the hospitality industry worldwide, TCTF is a collective of travel businesses which aim to educate the industry and customers about how to travel better, helping us to use our travels to support high-impact conservation and community projects”

THE GREEN EDIT, JULIET KINSMAN



CONDE NAST TRAVELLER  
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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC  
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TELEGRAPH  
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GUARDIAN  
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FORBES  
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NET-A-PORTER (PORTER)  
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## THE FUTURE – WHAT'S ON FOR OUR MEMBERS?

2022

- 6 'Conscious Conversations', from Sustainability Certifications with BCorp, the GSTC and The Long Run, to Accessible Travel
- Regular speaker sessions hosted by travel luminaries, including Virunga's Emmanuel de Merode
- Monthly group discussions hosted by founder Henry Comyn and mentor Portia Hart
- 4 digital community mixer events

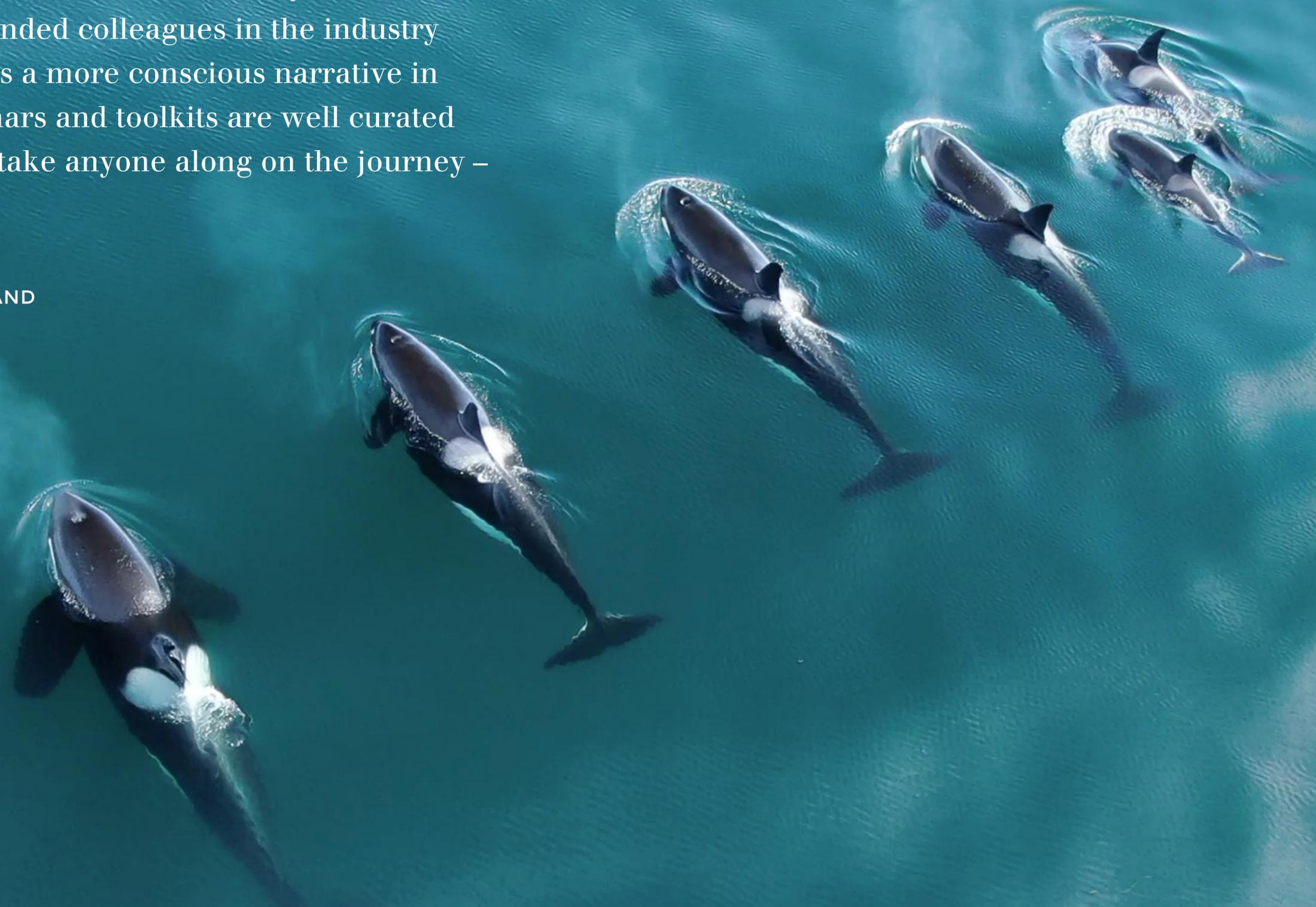
### MEMBER BENEFITS

- Complimentary member consultations with ecollective kick-starting The Conscious Travel Foundation Carbon League
- 20% discount on 'How to Become A Better Tour Operator' course with the Good Tourism Institute



“The Conscious Travel Foundation has been a catalyst in connecting with more like-minded colleagues in the industry that are eager to work towards a more conscious narrative in the travel industry. The webinars and toolkits are well curated and serve as tangible tools to take anyone along on the journey – no matter where one stands.”

RAPHAEL CURIGER, AMADI, SWITZERLAND



## AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME

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We recognise the need, as a foundation, to create a more diverse and inclusive community. In doing so, we can move away from entrenched behaviours, raise voices and share stories of minority groups in the travel industry, going beyond creating awareness and turning it into allyship.

We have partnered with industry change-maker and advocate, Chris King, of **Lightning Travel Recruitment** to launch our new Ambassadors Programme. Our aim is to create a community of passionate conscious travel advocates who are shining a light and shouting loudly about industry causes – from sustainability, greenwashing, LGBTQ+ issues and BAME representation, to women in leadership and ageism in the travel industry.

Initially, we will be welcoming 10 founding ambassadors into our community, offering complimentary membership, an invitation to all our talks and panel sessions and the opportunity to use our platform and channels to shout about the causes close to their hearts. Our hope is that the Ambassador Programme will expand horizons and forge connections, driving vital conversations and positive change that is mutually beneficial to both our **Ambassadors** and The Conscious Travel Foundation – driving positive change for the future of the industry.





## OPERATIONS

We've restructured the team for 2022, with all **founders\*** taking on the role of trustees. Olivia, Henry and Maudie form the management team, responsible for the ongoing operations of the foundation.

### FUNDING THE FOUNDATION

Last year the foundation was predominantly run on a voluntary basis. For 2022, we have introduced two part-time paid roles for Maudie and Olivia, to facilitate the day-to-day running of the foundation.

We are looking for sponsorship to cover the running costs of the foundation, allowing us to funnel all membership fees into the charitable fund and safeguard the future of the foundation. Should you be interested in sponsoring the Foundation, please do **contact the team.\***

**Contact:** [info@theconscioustravelfoundation.com](mailto:info@theconscioustravelfoundation.com)

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